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["THE PISTOL HAS BEEN STOLEN," CRIED NATHALIE. "SOME ONE MUST HAVE ENTERED MY ROOM IN MY ABSENCE AND TAKEN IT."]

THE MISTRESS OF LYNWOOD.

—30:—

CHAPTER XXXVI.

LEFT alone with the dead man in the evening gloom, Isabel Farquhar remained for some time in exactly the same attitude as at Mr. Egerton's departure; her head bent, her hands clasped in front of her, her thoughts all concentrated on the solution of one question—who had done this foul deed?

Physically, as well as morally brave, no shadow of fear fell upon her, although she was in a situation which might well have terrified any woman of even tried courage.

Her first sentiment, when she saw that her brother was murdered, had naturally been one of grief, but the second followed it very quickly, and was equally strong—the thought of vengeance.

Mingling with her Greek blood was a strain of Hebrew—that race which cries out "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth!"—and to her the Mosaic law seemed the law of nature

of eternity, of justice—a law whose fulfilment she would exact at whatever cost to herself.

Presently she rose from her knees, and took up the lamp that had hitherto been standing on the ground, and with it she proceeded to examine the moss all round the spot where the tragedy had taken place, in the hope of finding some clue to guide her.

But none was visible—there were not even any footmarks, for the moss was so thick and elastic that it sprang back after being trodden upon, and showed no signs of pressure.

Although the body lay in an open space, there were several small bushes around as well as the thicker growth of larger trees, so that supposing Farquhar had been leaning against the bridge, the assassin would have had ample opportunity of lying in ambush and taking a quiet and steady aim.

"He may have been killed by the stray shot of a poacher," said Isabel, to herself, for her mind was of that logical order to which the most remote contingencies will occur; "and if so, a gun was probably the weapon used. In that case, it would most likely have been fired from a distance, and so the shot would

scatter—it is easy enough to determine that point."

Again she bent down and examined the wound on the dead man's forehead, and then she saw that this last hypothesis of hers must be incorrect; for, in spite of the blood that lay around, it was easy to see that the small round hole had been caused by a bullet, and not the shots of a gun.

This at once disposed of the poacher theory, for a poacher would assuredly not carry a pistol about with him.

"No," said Isabel aloud, as she rose, "the act was a premeditated one, not accidental."

She resumed her search amongst the bushes, under and between which she examined the ground very carefully, without finding anything to reward her, until at length she came to a tree that had a hollow trunk, in which—about four feet from the ground—was a long slit some three or four inches in width.

She held the light above her head and peered down, and it seemed to her that the rays of the lamp struck on something glittering—steel, or some other bright metal—which

lay on the heap of dead leaves that had accumulated in the bottom of the hollow.

Determining to satisfy herself on this point, she looked round for the purpose of discovering some crooked stick, by whose aid she might accomplish her object, and being unsuccessful, went back and possessed herself of Farquhar's own cane, which was lying some little distance from his body, and which possessed a curved handle admirably adapted for the purpose she had in view.

She pushed it down through the orifice, and after one or two attempts finally contrived to hook on to it the object that had caught her eye, and which proved to be a small pistol, silver-mounted, and of very fine workmanship.

The metal was beautifully chased, the design being almost unique, and on a small plate was a twisted monogram, at the sight of which Isabel started violently, for she recognized it as that of her brother; indeed, it was one of a pair that she herself had chosen, and which she had often seen him practising with—for he was rather proud of his proficiency as a marksman, although he cared little for sport.

Two days before, the conversation had turned on some jewel robberies that had recently taken place, and Nathalie had said, laughingly,—

"I think, now that I really have some jewels worth taking care of, I ought to provide myself with a pistol for their protection!"

"Should you really like to have one?" Farquhar had asked, with that eager attention to her wishes that he invariably exhibited; and the girl had replied in the affirmative, upon which her father had gone to his room and fetched down this very pistol, which he had presented to her.

"It looks like a toy!" she had exclaimed, as she examined it.

"A very deadly one!" the banker answered, and then Isabel herself had said,—

"As you have separated the pair, you may as well give me the other one."

"That is, unfortunately, impossible; for it is no longer in my possession," he replied, and thus the matter ended, Nathalie carrying the pistol upstairs with her when she went to dress for dinner.

Meanwhile Sir Ralph and Dr. Seaforth sat at the window until it grew too dark for each to see the expression of tense anxiety on the other's face, and by-and-by a servant entered with lights, and the two gentlemen left their post, and allowed the curtains to be drawn.

"Where can Otho and Lady Lynwood be? What has become of them?" answered the Baronet, excitedly. "I think I shall go towards King's Dene and see if I can meet them."

"Better not," advised his companion. "Remember, there are two roads to King's Dene, and as you don't know which one they will choose, the chances are equal that you miss them."

Sir Ralph, recognizing the justice of this remark, allowed himself to be persuaded, and then there followed another interval of suspense, broken only by the clock on the mantelpiece chiming the quarters and half-hours, for he attempted to keep up any sort of conversation would have been absurd.

At last eleven o'clock sounded, and then Sir Ralph started up.

"I cannot wait any longer—this suspense is driving me mad. I must go towards King's Dene, and take the risk of missing them!" he exclaimed.

"Hush!" said Dr. Seaforth. "I believe I hear the noise of carriage wheels."

The sound came nearer, and it was evident the horses were being driven very quickly. A few minutes later the door was thrown violently open, and Otho entered.

"What is the matter? What has happened?" exclaimed his uncle, seeing by his

pale face and agitated manner that he was much disturbed.

He answered the question by another.

"Is Adrienne here?"

"Adrienne!" repeated Sir Ralph, in stupefied accents, "she is with you, is she not?"

"No. She went to King's Dene with me, and then disappeared while I was speaking to the groom, and I have not seen her since. I fancied she might have returned alone."

"She has not done so. She must still be at King's Dene," said Sir Ralph, but he spoke in an undecided, quivering manner that left it doubtful whether he understood what he was saying.

The soldier shook his head, and sank into a chair with an air of exhaustion.

"No, she is not there."

There was a silence. Sir Ralph seemed actually dumbfounded, Otho was evidently genuinely agitated; and even Dr. Seaforth, although not personally concerned in the matter, felt this was a crisis in the Lynwood family, and was not altogether unmoved.

"But what can have become of Lady Lynwood?" he said, presently. "People are not spirited away nowadays; and there must be some natural explanation of her absence."

"I can offer none," answered Otho, in a low voice. "I was hoping against hope that she had yielded to a sudden caprice and returned home alone, unlikely as such an action would have been. Perhaps," he added, springing up from his chair, "she may actually have done so, and is in her room at the present moment. I will go and see."

Without waiting to hear what the others said he left the library, but returned in a few minutes, bringing with him a jewel case, whose open lid revealed the fact that it was empty.

"She is not there," he said, "but I found this case open, and I remembered that it had formerly contained the family diamonds. Has Lady Lynwood given them back to you, or are they still in her possession?" he asked, to his uncle.

Sir Ralph had to wet his lip before replying.

"I have not seen them since the day on which I gave them into her hands."

"Then," said Otho, with conviction, "they have either been stolen or she has taken them away herself. The latter hypothesis is the most likely, and with this light thrown on the subject, I had better state a fact that I intended concealing from you as long as possible, namely, that Lionel Egerton has also left King's Dene, and that he and Lady Lynwood were last seen together."

He pronounced the last words in a low voice, but very distinctly, and when he had concluded their utterance he looked away, for, callous as he was, he dared not glance at his uncle to see how he received them.

A groan, which was the expression of a terrible anguish, broke from the Baronet's lips, and with the natural instinct of hiding his sorrow he put his hands to his face, and covered it, while Dr. Seaforth started up from his chair, and crossing over to him laid his hand on his shoulder in token of silent sympathy, which he dared not utter in any other way.

Instantly, and without further explanation on Otho's part, an entire comprehension of his meaning had come to both his listeners, one of whom was absolutely crushed by the suddenness and awful nature of the blow.

Sir Ralph did not attempt to say a word in his wife's defence; indeed, to mention her name would, at the present moment, have been impossible for the power of speech. Even thought itself seemed at a standstill, and he could only mechanically repeat to himself that one cruel sentence,—

"Lionel Egerton and Lady Lynwood were last seen together!"

No doubt of the truth of his nephew's implied accusation came to the Baronet, in spite of the faith he had had in Adrienne's

purity; and if there seems anything strange in this fact, it must be remembered that for the last week or two Sir Ralph had been constantly haunted by the ideas suggested by Otho that his wife did not care for him, and that she had been forced into a marriage with a man old enough to be her father simply through the pressure of circumstances, which she had not sufficient strength to resist. Then, too, in a subtle and impalpable way, Otho's insinuations concerning her intimacy with Egerton had floated through his mind, and produced an effect of which he was unconscious, for he had striven hard to keep up his trust in the young girl he loved so well, and blinded himself to a knowledge that the mere fact of repeating to himself he had faith in her was a proof of how rapidly that faith was waning.

"Uncle!" cried Captain Lynwood at last, starting up, and speaking in a voice that seemed to tremble with emotion, "be brave—master this blow, instead of letting it master you. Surely you will not grieve for a woman who has repaid your kindness with such base ingratitude, and has allowed one of your friends to make love to her under your own roof?"

"Hush!" exclaimed Sir Ralph, sternly, "Do not say another word against her. Whatever has happened—whatever may happen—remember she is my wife."

"I do remember it, and it is for that reason I cannot restrain my indignation. Do you think that I am altogether without pride in the honour of our family, the stainlessness of our name? If so, you are mistaken, for even you yourself cannot suffer a greater shame than I do at this foul blot on a shield that has hitherto been unblemished!"

He spoke hotly and hastily, and as if he were carried entirely out of himself by the vehemence of a passion he was unable to control; only it struck Dr. Seaforth, who was an unprejudiced listener, that there was something forced and melodramatic in his manner, and his voice had a false ring in it, or the physician fancied it had.

"Is it proved, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that Lady Lynwood has really deserted her husband and her home?" he asked.

Otho turned upon him with surprise.

"I am afraid there is not the slightest doubt on the point. In no other way can we explain the fact of her leaving me directly we got to King's Dene, and remaining away until now, nearly half past eleven o'clock. If you want any further confirmation, it may be found in the evidence of some workmen who noticed a cab waiting some little distance beyond the King's Dene Lodge gates, and saw two people get into it, after which it was driven rapidly away in the direction of the station, so there can be no question as to the destination of the pair, and they are in London by this time—perhaps on their way to the Continent. Lady Lynwood was evidently prepared for the elopement, and provided herself beforehand with the family diamonds, which represent a very considerable amount of money."

"And are you sure the companion of her flight was Lionel Egerton?" queried Dr. Seaforth.

"As sure as it is possible to be, and that reminds me of some terrible news I have to tell you concerning a tragedy that has just taken place at King's Dene. I should have mentioned it before, only it was driven out of my thoughts by more personal matters. Gilbert Farquhar has been shot dead in the plantation close to the house, and Nathalie Egerton has been placed under arrest as his murderess."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

NEEDLESS to say with what consternation Mr. Egerton's intelligence was received when he got back to the house, and told of the awful scene that had been enacted in the plantation.

He instantly inquired for Lionel, for it was

on him he instinctively felt he must lean at this critical moment; but when he heard his son had not yet returned, he, of course, saw the necessity for immediate action, and at once sent a man on horseback to W— to acquaint the police superintendent with what had occurred, and ask him to send over some officers without delay, and also to bring a doctor.

Nathalie, usually so courageous and equal to any emergency, was completely paralysed by the suddenness and terror of this new revelation.

She had previously been in a state of wild anxiety with regard to the absence of her brother and Lady Lynwood, for which she could only account in one way; but now this was almost driven from her mind, and she felt dazed and bewildered under an awful sense of calamity that could not now be averted.

Mr. Egerton returned to the plantation with a couple of men, who hastily improvised a stretcher, and would have placed the dead body of Farquhar upon it had not Isabel imperiously negated the proposal.

"Let him stay where he is! Do not touch him!" she exclaimed, waving them off. "I will not have the body moved until a surgeon has seen it, and then he will be able to declare from its position that it was impossible my brother could have committed suicide."

The Squire recognised the wisdom of this remark, and at once acquiesced, and so they all four waited there in the night silence until the arrival of the doctor and a couple of policemen. The former, a young man of about thirty, bent down and examined the corpse.

"He is quite dead—indeed, death must have ensued instantaneously, since the bullet has evidently penetrated the brain," he observed, addressing himself to Isabel, who had pushed herself to the front, and looked very white and composed, although the composure was only attained by a supreme effort at self-possession.

"And do you think the wound could have been self-inflicted?" she asked.

"It is really impossible to say; but, if it were, you would find the weapon quite close to the body, for the deceased would assuredly have fallen the very moment the shot was fired."

The two constables made a minute search, but nothing was discovered, and then Isabel handed them the revolver, together with a simple and concise statement of where and under what circumstances she found it.

The elder of the two police-officers, a clean-shaven, shrewd-looking man of about forty, named White, who had been very successful as a detective, and whose acumen was thought a great deal of by his superiors, carefully put away the revolver, and then took out a notebook.

"Will you please give me what information you can concerning this affair?" he said, addressing himself to Mr. Egerton.

Isabel, giving the Squire no time to reply, said, quickly,—

"I think I shall be able to do that, even better than Mr. Egerton."

The detective looked at her keenly.

"Are you a relative of the deceased, madam?" he asked.

"I am his only living relative—his sister."

White bowed, apparently satisfied as to the propriety of allowing her to make a statement, and took a pencil from the notebook.

"Be good enough to tell me all you know with regard to your brother's movements this evening."

"I will; and perhaps I had better begin by telling you that to-morrow was to have been his wedding-day. At dinner to-night he seemed in very good spirits, and was, indeed, rather more cheerful than usual. After dinner he and I and Miss Egerton went into the library for the purpose of signing the marriage settlements, and more particularly with the view of my brother executing a deed by which

he gave up certain claims he had on the King's Dene estate."

The Squire winced painfully as she made this statement, but did not make any endeavour to interrupt her.

"This deed he gave to Miss Egerton as a wedding present, and then he went out into the grounds with her. I did not see him alive afterwards."

"What time was that?"

"A little after eight, as nearly as I can say; but I did not look at my watch, and this was a very light evening, so that I may possibly be wrong in my calculation."

"You say Mr. Farquhar did not return?"

"No; Mr. Egerton and I walked into the grounds as well, and when it grew dusk, and we found the other two had not come in, we went to the gate leading to the plantation, and waited for them. While there, we heard the report of firearms, and I can fix the time exactly, for the stable clock struck nine immediately after. I wished to go and see who had fired the shot, but Mr. Egerton dissuaded me, saying it was probably his son, and less than ten minutes later, Nathalie Egerton joined us, coming from the plantation."

She paused, and the detective lifted his eyes to hers, and then continued making notes.

"Had she also heard the shot?"

"Yes, and attributed it to the same cause as her father had. She said she had left my brother in the plantation, and he had promised to meet her at the gate. Finding he did not come I wished to go and look for him, but she negated the proposal, and finally, we all three went back to the house together, thinking he might possibly be there, which, however, was not the case. I was very anxious, for I noticed that Miss Egerton's manner was agitated, and I felt strangely dissatisfied on my brother's behalf; so a little while later, accompanied by Mr. Egerton, I returned to the plantation, and then we found the body"—she shuddered, and looked away—"lying exactly as you see it now."

"And you have not left it since?"

"No."

The detective thoughtfully bit the end of his pencil, and then took the revolver from his pocket.

"This has evidently been discharged recently," he observed, "and in all probability it is the weapon with which the deed was committed. Can either you, Miss Farquhar, or you, Mr. Egerton, identify it?"

"I can," returned Isabel, quickly; "but I prefer your asking Mr. Egerton first."

The Squire examined it, and then grew paler, if possible, than he was before.

"This is evidently not the first time you have seen it," remarked White, who was carefully observant of him and Isabel.

"No. I recognise it as one formerly belonging to Mr. Farquhar, and given by him to my daughter a few days ago," replied the Squire.

"And Miss Egerton's manner, when she joined you at the gate, was, you say, agitated?" said the detective, to Isabel, who replied in the affirmative.

After a few seconds' meditation, White knelt down, and turned out the contents of the dead man's pockets—a few letters, a cigar case, a memorandum book, about five pounds in gold, and a handful of loose silver, together with his watch and chain.

"Robbery was not the motive of the crime," he said, as he rose, "for nothing seems to have been touched. I will take possession of these, and also of the deceased's diamond ring, and now we can have the body removed, and I must ask Miss Egerton a few questions. Surely, as she was the last person seen with the dead man, she will be able to afford some information."

His instructions were carried out, and then the little procession moved towards the house, and the grim figure on the stretcher was laid in the library. Afterwards, the detectives, Isabel, and Mr. Egerton proceeded to the drawing-room, and Nathalie, who had retired upstairs, was sent for. The poor girl looked

white and worn, and there were hollow circles round her eyes. The excitement and agitation she had gone through for the last week or so, and now this terrible crisis, had wrought their effect on her appearance, and she seemed actually weighed down by anxiety.

"I want you to tell me what transpired between you and Mr. Farquhar after you went together to the plantation?" said White, noting her appearance, and also the fact that her voice was unsteady when she began to speak.

She told all she had to tell clearly enough—how she had left Farquhar, then she heard the shot, and had returned to the gate, expecting to find him.

"And were you not alarmed by the report?" asked the detective, as she paused.

"No."

"It did not strike you as being unusual at the hour of the evening?"

"No," again.

"To what did you attribute it?"

"I thought it might possibly be poachers."

"But you made no attempt to clear up the point by going towards the spot from whence it appeared to proceed?"

Nathalie did not answer—she could not tell him that she had been so absorbed in the misery of her own situation that it rendered her insensible to other considerations, and that, as a matter of fact, she had thought very little about the shot—or, indeed, about Farquhar himself.

"And when you found Mr. Farquhar was not at the gate, did you not wonder what had become of him?"

"I do not think so."

"No suspicion of foul play entered your head?"

"Certainly not."

"But as time went on, and he did not appear, you must have grown alarmed on his behalf?"

"I did not. As a matter of fact I was thinking more about the absence of my brother and Lady Lynwood than of anything else."

The detective seemed surprised; to him it appeared strange that a young lady on the eve of marriage with the dead man should have been so indifferent as to his whereabouts.

"I suppose," he said—and there may have been some personal curiosity, as well as professional acuteness, that prompted the question—"your contemplated marriage was one of inclination?"

A burning blush rose to Nathalie's cheeks, then died away, leaving her white as an ascension lily, but she was silent.

"Let me answer, as Miss Egerton declines," exclaimed Isabel. "The marriage was not one of inclination on her part, and the engagement was entered into solely on consideration of my brother giving up a mortgage he had on the King's Dene estates, which he did this evening."

Nathalie cast upon her a glance of withering scorn, for she saw the feminine spite that was veiled beneath sisterly affection, and had some faint inkling of its origin; but she did not say anything. What, indeed, could she say when Isabel had stated nothing but the truth?

"Then," said the detective, "do I understand that by the deed Mr. Farquhar signed this evening he gave up his claims against the King's Dene estate?"

"That is so," answered Mr. Egerton.

"And consequently," added Isabel, "Miss Egerton and her family reap as much benefit as if the marriage had actually been consummated."

There was a slight pause, broken by the detective, who handed Nathalie the pistol.

"That is your property, I believe?" he said. She looked at it in stupid amazement.

"I have a pistol similar to this, but it is upstairs in my drawer," she answered.

"Are you sure of that?"

"Quite sure; I saw it there myself a very little while ago. I will fetch it down if you like."

"Could you not send for it?"

Nathalie looked somewhat surprised, but rang the bell. It was answered by a footman.

"Send my maid to me," said the young girl, and a few minutes later Warren entered, calm and self-possessed as usual, and apparently little affected by the excitement into which the household generally had been thrown by the events of the evening.

"Will you go upstairs into my room, and look in the small right hand drawer of the wardrobe, where you will find a revolver like this?" said Nathalie, indicating the pistol which White still held in his hand.

Warren glanced at it, and then quietly left the room. Some few minutes elapsed before she returned, and then she was empty-handed.

"I have searched well, but I cannot find the pistol anywhere," she announced, in her even, monotonous tones.

"Cannot find it!" repeated her mistress, deeply perplexed. "You cannot have looked well."

"I have looked thoroughly, miss."

"But it was there twenty minutes ago, when I went to get a handkerchief from the drawer."

Warren looked dubious.

"Then some one must have taken it, for it is certainly not there now."

"I will go and see myself," exclaimed Nathalie, going impulsively towards the door, whither, however, she was followed by the detective.

"Permit me to accompany you," he said, suavely, and, although she was rather surprised at the request, she said nothing, but led the way upstairs into her bedroom, and went at once to the drawer indicated.

The pistol had disappeared.

"It has been stolen," she cried, vehemently. "Some one must have entered my room since I left to go downstairs and taken it."

"I do not think so," said Warren, who was standing at her side, with respectful attention. "I have been sitting sewing in the dressing-room, and if anyone had come in here I should have been pretty sure to have heard them."

Nathalie was dumbfounded, and hardly knew whether her senses had not in some way deceived her.

Events were crowding on events so quickly this evening that she felt sick and bewildered with excitement, and a horrible sensation of unreality, such as the moving scenes of some frightful phantasmagoria might have occasioned, was upon her.

She turned helplessly to the detective.

"I cannot explain this strange circumstance. That the pistol was there half-an-hour ago I am convinced."

"And you are equally convinced that it is not there now?" he said, a shade of sarcasm in his voice.

"It is impossible to doubt the evidence of my eyes, and yet—it is altogether a mystery," she answered, sinking down into a chair with an air of utter exhaustion.

At that moment a small Swiss clock on a bracket struck the hour—twelve o'clock, and roused her attention.

"So late!" she exclaimed. "What can have become of my brother and Lady Lynwood? Oh! this suspense is maddening."

She caught up a cloak lying on a chair and threw it over her shoulders; then proceeded towards the door.

"Where are you going, Miss Egerton?" asked White, following her, and laying his hand on her arm.

She shook off the touch with her old imperious hauteur.

"Downstairs, and then out into the air; I feel suffocated indoors," she answered, shortly.

"Excuse me, but I cannot permit you to leave the house," he said, with respect, but very firmly; and again he took hold of her arm.

By this time she had thrown open the door, and now stood on the threshold, White and her maid behind her, while in the passage

outside were Isabel and Mr. Egerton, who had come to see the result of the search for the pistol.

"You cannot permit me to leave the house!" she echoed, slowly and amazedly. "By what right do you dare address me in such a manner?"

"By one I am loth to mention, but which the duties of my profession compel me to exercise," he answered, with reluctance. "Miss Egerton, believe me, I am truly sorry to put an indignity on one of your name, and that one a lady; but I have no other alternative. The evidence I have just heard—the fact that you were the last person observed with the murdered man, and that your pistol was found close to the scene of the crime, together with the undisputed fact of your being in the plantation at the time it was committed—all point to one conclusion; and so I arrest you, in the Queen's name, on the charge of having murdered Mr. Gilbert Farquhar!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

NATHALIE heard the detective's words, but they fell upon her ear without carrying any distinct impression to her brain, and she repeated them over to herself as a child might repeat a lesson, or a parrot the sentence it has been taught to say by rote.

Then her father's voice, uttering a wild and indignant protest, brought with it a comprehension of what had really happened—that she was accused of the crime of murder.

"Indeed, sir, I am, as I said before, truly grieved that my duty is such a disagreeable one," said White, in answer to the Squire, "but if you will just review the circumstances you will see I can do nothing different to what I have done. I will soften matters as much as I can, that you may depend; and instead of taking Miss Egerton to W—to-night she can retire to her room, and remain there until the morning, by which time some fresh evidence may turn up, and I may be able to see my way clear to releasing her. I have every wish to spare your feelings and those of the family generally."

This was true, for White was a local man, and held the name of Egerton in much esteem, as did the county at large.

That one of the race should commit such a terrible crime as murder he looked upon as an anomaly and a disgrace to W—shire, but certainly it behoved him to take care she had no chance of escaping from the stern hand of the law, as represented by himself, and so he was forced into the step he had just taken.

Her father's indignation and horror at the accusation brought against her roused Nathalie to a full sense of what had befallen her; and, strange to say, her mind seemed in a moment to recover its balance, and she was once more the clear-sighted, courageous girl who never hesitated to face a difficulty, whatever might be its nature.

She realised to the full the gravity of her situation, and she also saw that the circumstantial evidence was terribly against her; and that, as a matter of fact, White had not exceeded his duty in the step he had taken. She turned towards him with a peculiar gentleness.

"I thank you for your consideration," she said, quietly. "I will at once retire to my room, and you can remain in the adjoining dressing-room until morning. I see quite well that you are simply executing your duty in placing me under arrest; and, as you say, some fresh evidence may be forthcoming that will prove my innocence in a few hours' time. Papa, my own dear father!" she exclaimed, going up to the Squire, and putting both arms round his neck, "don't allow yourself to grieve more than you can help over this; keep up your courage, for Heaven will watch over us and assist us in our great need."

"My darling!" said the old man, with a sob of dire anguish, and for a few moments father and daughter were unconscious of

those around them, and clasped each other in a tearful embrace.

Then Nathalie drew herself away, desirous of putting an end to this painful scene.

"Go downstairs now," she said, but he vehemently negatived the proposal.

"I will stay with you—do you think I can let you pass these long night hours alone?"

"I think there are many things demanding your attention, and that I should be wrong if I allowed you to stay with me," she said, firmly. "Indeed, I shall be much better by myself, whereas it is your duty to send messengers about, and try to gain some news of Lionel."

"Lionel—I had forgotten him!" murmured the Squire, to whom his daughter was all in all; then he added, "Yes, you are right. I will despatch servants at once, for none of them will object to going out although it is so late—they are too much excited to think of going to bed."

He kissed Nathalie, and then left her, while Isabel Farquhar retired to her own apartments.

"Can I do anything for you, miss?" asked Warren, her voice full of quiet sympathy.

But Nathalie only shook her head, and so the maid went away, and the young girl sat in her boudoir, while the detective remained in the dressing-room adjoining.

However, as he had the key of the door leading to the passage, he permitted her to close the one communicating with the rest of the suite, and thus she was virtually alone.

What her feelings were may perhaps be better imagined than described. Her situation was, indeed, as terrible as it could possibly be. Accused of the crime of murder, and on evidence which she herself acknowledged was strongly in favour of her guilt, her brother absent, Sir Ralph Lynwood—the only other friend on whose advice she could rely—estranged by reason of his wife's strange disappearance—she had absolutely no one to whom she could apply in this awful emergency.

Her father was devoted to her, but he was too visionary, too impractical, to be of much use in a crisis like this, and so Nathalie had no one but herself to trust to.

Her brain whirled, her eyesight seemed to fail her, thoughts swam before her mental vision in a strange chaotic dance, and for a moment she thought her senses were really deserting her, and that she was going mad.

She fell on her knees, and threw up her hands in pitiful appeal to a higher power.

"Help me, Heaven!" broke from her lips, in a cry of agony, and then she let her head sink on her bosom, and she lay prone on the carpet, in an attitude of utter abandonment.

Look whichever way she would no gleam of light was visible on the horizon of her despair, and she grew bewildered every time she tried to form some mental plan for the future.

But this mood did not last long. With one of her strong, self-reliant nature it was impossible it should, and presently she rose and bathed her brows in some eau de cologne that happened to be on a side-table, and then began pacing backwards and forwards, as was her custom, when she wanted to think out any question of importance.

"Above all things I must keep calm, for if I lose my head I don't know what will become of us all," she said to herself. "I have only myself to lean upon, and surely that idea should brace me to coolness."

She tried to detach her thoughts from Farquhar's tragic death, and her own critical position, in order to concentrate them on her brother's mysterious disappearance, regarding which she could not make up her mind with any degree of certainty.

At one minute she feared the worst—feared that Lionel's unhappy love had proved too strong for him, and that, yielding to the dictates of passion, he had induced Lady Lynwood to leave her husband and her home in order to fly with him. The next her knowledge of the young man's scrupulously honourable and

upright character, his hatred of everything low and mean and ungentlemanly, and his chivalrous regard for Adrienne, together with the girl's own purity, made her abandon the idea with disgust, and feel that although appearances might be ever so damning she would yet keep faith in her brother and Lady Lynwood.

But then came the question of what had become of them?

People did not lose themselves, or get spirited away through supernatural agency in real life, and only by the theory of some accident having happened could their absence be explained. But what could the nature of that accident be?

A dozen suggestions flitted through Nathalie's mind, but she abandoned them one by one, and confessed the question baffled her—try as she would she could find no answer to it. Nor did it seem that an answer would be forthcoming; for as so many hours had elapsed without any tidings it was clear that they either had not the intention or the means of communicating their whereabouts, and each minute that passed rendered it less likely they would do so.

And so, in questioning, retrospection, and wild wonderings as to what the end of it all would be, mingled with a natural feeling of pity for poor Farquhar's sad fate, the slow hours dragged themselves by. Never had night seemed so long—never had the first gleams of daylight been so welcome!

From the adjoining apartment came the sound of Mr. White gently snoring—he had placed his chair against the door, and was what he called "sleeping with one eye open"—that is to say, he roused himself every now and again to make sure that his prisoner was not attempting to escape, and, when satisfied on that point, resumed his nap.

Gradually the house, which at first had seemed full of a strange excitement, sank into silence, broken only by the occasional shutting or opening of a door, and then the cocks began to crow, thus heralding in the dawn.

It broke very slowly and coldly, the grey tints lightening, until presently a rosy glow suffused them, and then the candles looked yellow and garish contrasted with the purer light, and Nathalie blew them out, and drew back the curtains, thinking to herself how dreary and dismal the room looked—as, in fact, it did.

The fire had burnt out, and a mass of cold, grey cinders now lay in the grate, making it appear even more cheerless than if it had been quite empty; while the dust of yesterday rested thickly on tables and chairs, and the room presented that general untidiness of appearance observed when its occupiers have been sitting up all night.

Nathalie herself was in accordance with it, for these few hours of agonised suspense had not been without their effect on her own appearance. There was not a vestige of colour in her cheeks, and her eyes looked unnaturally large and bright; she still wore the dinner dress she had put on the evening before, and it seemed very incongruous with the freshness of the dawn. The girl caught sight of herself in a mirror, and drew back from the reflection with a half smile of surprised self-pity; but she did not waste time in thinking over her appearance just now, when there were matters so much more important to occupy her mind, for it had just struck her that, in all probability, she would be removed to W— sometime during the morning unless evidence tending to establish her innocence were forthcoming.

Of this she had not much hope, for it seemed to her there was no one to search for proofs of her innocence, and whoever had committed the crime seemed to have taken every precaution against detection.

Of the identity of the assassin the girl could form no idea, but she was inclined to believe the crime must have been committed by some enemy of Farquhar's, who had fol-

lowed him from London, with the deliberate intention of wreaking this vengeance upon him, and had selected the evening before his projected marriage as the most fitting opportunity for carrying his evil design into execution.

By this time he had most likely made good his escape, and there was small hope of his being traced, unless the task were immediately undertaken by someone who would bring both zeal and energy to bear upon it.

Whom could she ask to undertake it?

Only one name presented itself in answer to this question—that of Hugh Cleveland, and Nathalie put her hands to her face in a sudden access of shame at the idea of his learning how terribly humiliated she had been. But this did not last long, for her knowledge of Cleveland's character was sufficient to assure her that he was the last man in the world to desert a friend who was in trouble of any kind, much less such extremity as this present one of hers.

Should she send and ask him to help her?—she who had put upon him a slight such as a man seldom forgives—she who had broken her word to him and had done so much towards ruining his life?

She hesitated, for the remembrance of Isabel's hints and innuendoes came back to her, and if it were true that he had transferred his allegiance, it was not in the least likely that he would attempt to assist the woman accused of murdering the brother of his future wife.

No; she could not ask his aid, whatever might betide—it would be humbling herself too deeply—and, having come to this conclusion, Nathalie gave herself up to absolute despair.

But, in spite of everything, she could not dismiss the thought of her former lover from her mind; and at last, worn out with anxiety and weeping, she flung herself on the couch, crying out,—

"Oh, Hugh! Hugh! why are you not here to help me!"

(To be continued.)

THERE is no moment like the present; not only so, but, moreover, there is no moment at all, that is, no instant force and energy, but in the present. The man who will not execute his resolutions when they are fresh upon him can have no hope for them afterwards; they will be dissipated, lost, and perish in the huryskurry of the world, or sink in the slough of indolence.

AN ORIENTAL INSCRIPTION.—Inscription upon Oriental ware, vases, jars, fans, screens, and textiles are often examined with an amused but baffled curiosity. What can they mean? It is certain that they mean something. Even on the cheap halfpenny fans there are curious and grotesque faces which could not have been painted for their beauty. Only the initiated can read their story, and even among the Japanese themselves probably these specimens of pictorial rebus require some classical knowledge for their interpretation. History and fable and myth must be understood, and a Japanese who can understand must be equal in imagination to a commentator on Shakespeare. A recent traveller in Japan gives the story of one of these riddles. It is as good as any Egyptian hieroglyph. A Japanese of historic renown is represented as washing his ear in a waterfall. No basin would answer and no placid stream suffice. He must have the full force of a cataract to cleanse the ear into which an improper proposal had been spoken. At a pool below the fall a cow is drinking; but her owner, standing near her, glowers with anger at the ear-washer who is contaminating the stream. If individually people took to cleansing their ears from scandal and other unpleasant importunings, no "water-works" would suffice. Lady Macbeth's query would be in order—"Will all great Neptune's ocean" do it?

BIRDS OF THE FRIGID ZONE.

Of the eider duck there are five specimens—the Pacific, kink, spectacle, old squaw and stellar's eider. The brant, white-fronted and Arctic geese frequent this locality.

The Canada goose has been seen about one hundred miles further south and west. These and other birds migrate northward at a definite time each year. In 1882 they appeared on the 12th of May, and in 1883 they came one day later.

In their flight they draw across the American continent, and it is Ray's opinion that they go to Prince Patrick's Land.

Ray also believes there is no habitable land due north for man, beast or fowl, as there is no migration in that direction in the spring, nor do the birds return from due north in the fall.

Birds return in July in small flocks, passing south, although the king and Pacific ducks remained near the point as long as there was open water.

A few straggling geese and ducks built their hatcheries near the point along the sea shore, and in less than six weeks from the time the bird is hatched out it is strong enough to fly off with the older ones.

Of the small waders the fallaropes and sand-pipers hatch in immense numbers on the mainland, coming in May and leaving about the 1st of September, and all departing at once.

The murr, a small arctic diver, remains longer than any other bird. They have been frequently caught in the breathing holes of the seal in November.

Of the loon there are three species—the great north diver, the red throat and black throat. The little snow bunting comes early in April, a forerunner of the spring.

Ray describes this bird with a note like a skylark—a single bar—and the bird towers when it sings. It is the only place he ever heard them sing so sweetly.

EFFECT OF PAPER AND INK ON EYESIGHT.—The colours of paper and ink, says a writer in the "Scientific Monthly," are far more responsible for defective eyesight than cross-lights from opposite windows, light shining directly in the face, insufficient light, or small type. If these were remedied the principal cause of the mischief would still remain, the real root of the evil being the universally-used black ink and white paper. These, says the writer in question, are ruining the eyesight of all the reading nations. He argues that the rays of the sun are reflected by a white body and absorbed by a black one, and that we print our newspapers and books in direct opposition to the plainest correct principles of optical science. A book or newspaper as now printed being read by us, the eyes do not see the letters, which, being black, are non-reflective; the outlines of the impressions of the type reach the retina, but they are not received by the spontaneous, direct action of that organ. The white surface of the paper is reflected, but the letters are detected only by a discriminative effort of the optic nerves. This constant labour irritates the nerves, and, when long continued, exhausts their susceptibility. As proofs, the writer cites the well-known fact that the human eye cannot long sustain the glare of a white surface without injury. The sunlight reflected from fields of snow, unrelieved by the colours of other objects, or from the white sands of the desert, is, the world over, productive of ophthalmia. In accordance with this argument, if coloured paper were substituted for white the eyes of all reading people would at once be relieved of a blinding strain—a continuous effort bound to result in permanent weakening of the eyes. Nature and science, says the writer above quoted, tell us that the colour of all printing paper should be green. Green grass covers the ground, green leaves are on the trees, and green is the colour most grateful to the eye.

SAVED BY LOVE.

CHAPTER XX.

THE following morning finds Warren seated in the library, with bloodshot eyes and careworn face, irresolution stamped in its lines.

"The sole consolation amid all this trouble and turmoil is that Esme lives; false as I believe her, to have learnt that she had in desperation done something terrible, would have driven me mad."

"Captain Dorman, my lord," says the grey-headed old butler, breaking in upon his master's sad soliloquy.

"I hope you will not think me intrusive, my lord, for taking you by surprise, but my excuse must be my anxiety for Esme; she promised to write, but no letter having come I couldn't rest."

"Really, Captain Dorman, I am in the dark," returns Warren, rather frigidly; "your daughter has been here, but left yesterday."

"What! and never came home to me? Look here, my lord, there is some mystery behind my child's flight. She came back here in perfect good faith, to be reconciled to you; so true was she that she did not even hint at the cause of your estrangement. Did she leave here of her own accord?"

"Yes."

"Then you have, by your cruelty, driven my poor child out into the world; but you shall answer to me for this outrage. I care not for lord or commoner where her happiness is at stake."

"Really this bluster is unbecoming; as a husband I had a right to ask her for an explanation touching my honour."

"Pshaw! which is as bright as the stars above," almost roared the old sea-dog, bringing his stick down with a tremendous thump.

"That's your opinion," sneers Warren, nettled at the high tones assumed by his visitor.

"I beg your pardon, my lord; any honest man could read that for himself in her face, that was always covered with sunny smiles until you brought pain into it. You must prove what you assert, or I'll make you eat your words; my arm is strong enough still to defend my girl's fair fame."

And the choleric old gentleman rapped his stick again with redoubled vigour, making some marble busts tremble on their pedestals.

"This interview must end, Captain Dorman. Here is my solicitors' address; any communication will in the future pass through them."

"Hang your lawyers," shouts the irate captain, "I will deal with you; you were humble enough when you came sweethearting! Why, you ought to be prouder of her than ever now that she has given you so sweet a cherub."

Such a look of impatience leaps into Warren's moody face as he perceives no inclination on the captain's part to leave.

"Really I am far from well, Captain Dorman, and all the idle talk in the world cannot better things. If you wish to avoid a public scandal there is only one way to do it."

"What might that be?"

"To find your daughter—"

"And your wife, remember," interrupts the captain.

Unheeding this, Warren Croyland continues—

"Find her and ask her to explain away, if she can, why she remained at Edinburgh under the protection of some man who went by the title of her husband."

"Zounds, sir! how dare you asperse my child's character in her absence?" he exclaimed, jumping up in a fury and upsetting the heavy oaken chair with a crash.

"There is no need of bluster, I repeat; I

sincerely wish that what I assert were not true. Unfortunately for me it is too true, too mad-dening."

Captain Dorman can see that his son-in-law is fully under some most terrible misconception, for, loyal old man that he is, he will not harbour one faint suspicion against Esme's rectitude.

"I am ashamed and deeply grieved, my lord, that you should entertain such a poor opinion of your wife, who never deserved such odium at your hands. Heaven protect her, poor stricken lamb, with her helpless babe, foully accused of the basest conduct. That she is headstrong, wilful, I admit, but guilty of what you allege I swear she is not. Good-bye, Lord Croyland; you and I can never meet as friends again."

"Another link in the happy past snapped," groans the wretched husband, when the angry captain had flung himself out of the room.

"My poor pet! how slowly these confounded trains lag, just like a ship in a head wind. I want to fly to you, because I know you are crushed with sorrow," mutters the old man.

Popping his head out of the carriage window he shouts to the guard impatiently—

"Hi! there. Is this craft going to blow her steam all day instead of getting under weigh?"

"Just off, sir!" laughs the guard; amused at this exordium, the captain sinks back with a growl on his well-cushioned seat, which seemed to be stuffed with thorns.

"Father!"

"My dear child!"

And the two are locked in each other's arms.

"Praise be to Him who stills the angry waves," he says reverently; "you are safe in port once more, when I thought you were being dashed about among the breakers."

"But, dear old dad, there is much to tell you, and perhaps you will blame me when you know all, for I am not free from faults."

"Esme, my lass, look me in the face and tell me truly if any piratical craft has been chasing you into troubled waters?"

"No father, but a noble fellow stood my friend in the hour of my sore need, when only Providence knew whether I should ever open my eyes again upon this world."

"Your simple word is a beacon to me amid all this stormy weather, and I care not now how tongues may wag, for my Esme is true to herself and her poor old father."

Tears of joy well into his honest grey eyes, and he gulps down a sob inwardly, thanking One above for bringing such comfort into his stricken heart.

Days pass, and Esme clings to life for the sake of her child, otherwise she would be glad to lay it down and take up that rest in the grave, where the wicked cease from troubling.

"I could forgive him anything but that," is her oft-repeated argument, against the pleadings of her heart, that wishes to be reconciled to its idol; "to brand his innocent offspring with shame is such a heartless act that nothing can palliate in my eyes."

After a long battle with pride and anger, in which her heart-strings threaten to snap, she resolved to cast him out of her life forever, to forget him and to crush down that love that once was his.

Her letter to Warren is dashed off with a rapidity that shows she distrusts her strength even at the eleventh hour:—

"LORD CROYLAND.—No power on earth will ever compel me to see your face again; henceforward you are dead to me and my child. In time I may forget your cruelty, but never forgive; the diamonds belong to my daughter."

"ESME."

The letter lay on the table for some days before she could get her heart high enough to despatch it.

"There, baby dear, it is all over now, and you have no papa," she sobs, as she drops it into the letter-box with trembling fingers and tear-stained face.

CHAPTER XXI.

"HILLO! old fellow, this is good of you," exclaims Mac Ivor cordially, as Warren makes his appearance at his chambers in the Albany.

"I only heard last night that you were in London just as I was going to Doedsie," replies Warren, moodily.

"What in the name of goodness ails you, Croyland? Why you look like Banquo's ghost!"

"The fact is, Mac Ivor, I am not very well," flinging himself into a chair and facing his friend, a look of utter weariness on his once frank face.

"Try some of this, dear boy, it's good," pushing a flask of claret towards him; "you want tone; there's the remedy—a capital antidote against the blues."

"I want peace of mind; wine is useless, it only fevers my blood."

"By Jove, there is something seriously amiss," thinks the kind-hearted Scot.

"You are in a mess of some kind, Croyland," he says aloud, "if I can in any way assist you, pray command me."

"You can perhaps aid me in the solution of a black mystery that hangs like a funeral pall over my life, filling my waking moments with gloom, my dreams with misery, an earthly purgatory from which I see no hope of escape."

"Things can't surely be as bad as that! Go to Vichy and drink the waters; depend upon it your thoughts will soon take a more cheerful bent."

Warren shakes his head sadly, and mutters something about "too late."

"Make a clean breast of it, old fellow; there's nothing like that for lightening any trouble," says his friend persuasively, little dreaming of the volcano on which he himself is standing.

"Mac Ivor, we have been boys, school chums together, counsel and studied over the same lessons, squabbled, fought and made it up, to become faster friends than ever," exclaims Warren, with a feverish light in his eyes; "your foe was mine—is that not so?"

"Yes, dear boy, but what on earth are you driving at?"

"You shall hear. Did you ever meet a Miss Spartelli?"

The expression of wonderment that comes into Mac Ivor's face surprises the answer from him without a word being spoken.

"Why, of course; but do you know her, Croyland?"

"Know her, man! Why she is my wife, Heaven help me!"

"What!" almost shouts the laird, springing up in mad excitement, "Miss Spartelli your wife—oh, no!"

"What do you mean?" replies Warren, savagely, a fierce gleam leaping into his eyes, "explain your words; you have met her. Yes, I am no fool to be hoodwinked by a false friend or a faithless woman."

"Croyland, your words are those of a man who speaks at random—rash ones, which only our past friendship can pardon."

"Pshaw, pardon, when you are the man I have prayed to meet face to face; to look into your eyes and say it is time one of us died," cries Warren, an unholy fire in his eyes, a look of fiendish triumph on his face, while his fingers worked convulsively as if to clutch the throat of his victim, the man he believed to have wronged him.

"Mad!" muttered Mac Ivor, and, although physically brave, yet he looked anxiously towards the door for some means of retreat.

"Ah! a guilty conscience makes you a coward."

A flush of anger mounts the Scot's brow as he says, suppressing his just wrath by a mighty effort—

"Don't try my temper too far, Croyland."

Why, you have an angel for a wife, if indeed she is that. I swear by all I hold most sacred that I did not know her to be anything but Miss Spartzelli. I spoke to her of my love, I admit."

"Indeed! And you dare to tell me that to my face?"

"Yes, not only now, but before. Surely you remember my speaking of an English rose and you warning me against a woman with a mystery in her life? Do you think I would have confided such a matter to you if I thought the lady was your wife?"

"But what about Edinburgh, where you passed as her husband? Ah! your perfidy is unmasked, and I shall not be gulled any longer—by you." And with a cry of rage he springs at MacIvor's throat, taking him unawares.

A desperate struggle ensues, in which both men put forth their full strength.

There is a crash of chairs and a heavy fall, as MacIvor hurls his assailant across the room, where Warren lies like a log, with a thin red streak trickling from the right temple.

"Have I killed him?" groans MacIvor in terror. "Heaven knows; he forced the quarrel upon me, and roused my impetuous nature to madness. I must ring for assistance."

"Good gracious, my lord," says his manservant, "what is the matter?" hurrying up all of a shiver to the prostrate form of Lord Croyland; "a quarrel! I see it all, an unlucky blow. Rely upon me, I will be true as steel."

"Heavens! he cannot be dead," exclaims his master in terror.

"I can't say, my lord; but it looks like it," as he kneels and feels Warren's heart. "Oh, sir, if he should be dead! Fly! save yourself while there's time."

"Tush, Brice, don't stand wasting valuable time," he says, nervously unloosing Warren's tie, shirt collar, and throwing up the window; "but run for a doctor, bring him back with you."

Without waiting an instant Brice tears down the stairs on his errand, one of life and death.

"What would Esme say if she saw him lying there, struck down by my hand! Her eyes would stab me with reproaches. She is lost to me for ever. I am a Cain, with the crimson brand on my brow—I, who loved him as a brother. Oh, the misery of it all!"

MacIvor, while waiting for the doctor, sprinkled Warren's face with water, and forced brandy down his throat.

Suddenly Lord Croyland came to his senses, and glared at MacIvor, who was almost beside himself with joy.

"Dear old Warren, you have given me such a fright," he exclaims, "are you better? Can you ever forgive me? Put your hand in mine, and let us be friends again."

"Never," hisses Warren between his clenched teeth, disregarding his old friend's proffered hand; "nothing but blood shall wipe out the stain you have put on the Croyland escutcheon."

And before his abashed listener can interfere he gropes his way down into the street, and hailing a cab drives off, muttering—

"Trailed down! Now I can obtain my release."

A fiendish joy filled his heart at the supposed discovery of the man who had so fondly wronged him, and he meant to write a crushing letter to Esme, telling her of her shame.

"My dear boy, why what has come to you?" says old Margaret anxiously, looking with alarm at the wound on his temple, where the blood stain still remains; "who has hurt you? Let me bathe your poor face."

"Don't, pester me, woman," he growls, "can't you see I am not well."

His old nurse retreated from him, and the tears swam in her eyes, this being the first time she had ever been harshly spoken to by him.

"Oh, what a contemptible cur I am!" he

matters bitterly, seizing the dame's hand and saying abjectly,—

"Nurse, don't heed me; have pity on me, for I feel demented. I am not the Warren you knew in the old days."

His remorse is so keen that he fairly sobs, and hides his face on her faithful bosom, just as he had done before the cares and responsibilities of manhood had come upon him. Like a little child he now permitted her to sponge his temple, and drank the strong savoury soup which she brought him.

"I feel better, Margaret, thanks to your devotion," he says, with a sickly smile. "I have not broken my fast to-day till now. Is my mother alone?"

"Yes, and waiting your return anxiously."

"What a mercy I didn't present myself to her in my sad plight! I should have terrified her."

How his mother's heart beats when she hears his voice and well-known footstep!

A murmured prayer escapes her lips, for since his departure that morning she had been full of strange misgivings that his errand was such as to bring him into danger.

"A letter from her!" he murmurs, as he recognises the handwriting. "Can she be suing for pardon and reconciliation? If so, I pity her. Too late! too late! the gates of my mercy are closed to her for ever."

With trembling fingers he opens the letter, and then, after reading its contents, tears it into fragments and casts them into the fire, muttering vengefully,—

"Impenitent to the last; frail as a summer cloud. Would that your fatal beauty had never lured me on to distraction! Infatuated fool that I was to be ensnared by your wiles."

Then a softer mood possesses him all at once, as he conjures up the glorious autumn morning when Esme in her sweet girlish loveliness stood at the altar, and in a soft, musical voice, that thrilled through his being, said those words that made him the happiest man in creation.

"Can she be so false? Is it possible that one so blessed by nature, so passing fair, could be the vile miserable creature I deem her? Never did there exist a fairer sinner. Oh! the desolation of my life, for I feel like a poor wretch driven out of Paradise now that she is lost to me."

Again his mind becomes warped as it reverts to MacIvor, and he says vehemently,—

"It is her intention to fling me from her thoughts so that she can fly into the arms of her lover; but she little guesses that I have hounded him down. She shall never press her lips to his except in death—no! for I will kill him."

And a frenzied gleam darts from his eyes that makes him look more like a lunatic than his old self.

Having made this dreadful resolve, Warren hastens to his mother, feeling that he owes it to her as a duty to tell all.

"I am so pleased to see you back, Warren," she says, tenderly; for a mother's instincts seemed to haunt her with the conviction of his having passed through grave peril.

And her kiss was, if anything, more affectionate as she looked into his haggard face and noted the lines of care that were drawn there.

"I have grave news, mother."

Her face pales, and a low cry of alarm escapes her lips as she says deprecatingly,—

"No! Oh, Warren, do not tell me she has committed self-destruction!"

"Calm yourself, she is well, as far as I know. A woman who can write a defiant letter to the husband she has wronged, shifting the blame off her shoulders to his, is not a subject for suicide.—I have discovered the man who has wrought all this mischief and wrecked my life."

"Who is the wretch, Warren, the man you suspected?"

"Oh, no! it would have been better had my surmise been correct, for the bitterness would not be so poignant."

"But you have not answered my question, Warren," she persists, somewhat impatiently.

"You will regret that it is my once familiar friend—a man upon whose honour and fidelity I could, up to to-day, have staked my very life. But there, let it pass, mother; I will deal with him according to his offence."

"My son, our safety and that of our house, at this critical juncture, lies in our having no secrets from each other. Who is this man that has dared to put such a stigma upon us?"

"Lord MacIvor."

"Impossible!"

"I wish it were, mother, but it is the truth. I had the admission from his own lips; not of guilt, but that he is the man who passed as her husband at Edinburgh."

"This is a cruel stab, Warren. Even now I can scarcely realise that he could be guilty of such dastardly conduct to which his previous life gives the lie."

Lord Croyland's answer to this was to shake his head sorrowfully; and, sick of the theme, he was quitting the room, when she says,—

"Warren, what about my diamonds? I must have them back."

With a weary sigh as if to deprecate such a subject, he says,—

"Diamonds, mother, when I long for vengeance to wipe off the stain put upon our house!"

"Then am I to lose them? Are they to be desecrated by an infamous woman? I tell you I shall leave no stone unturned—no measure untried—to regain them."

"She lays claim to them," he says, with a little mocking laugh.

"Claim, indeed! The audacity of the creature!" this with deep scorn and elevation of her pencilled eyebrows as if to emphasise her disgust.

"Yes! She says, they are her child's inheritance. Do not harass my mind with baubles, or I shall go distracted. Some day we shall force her to make restitution."

"What! let her keep the family diamonds, never! I will find her out and wrest them from her," she mutters, vengefully—Esme's greatest offence in her eyes being their theft.

CHAPTER XXII.

LORD MACIVOR was like a man who had received a reprieve at the foot of the gallows, and almost forgave Warren his unjust accusations in the joy of knowing that he was free from the stain of murder.

"Perhaps if I were to see Esme and tell her of Warren's suspicions, she and I might find some means of convincing him of their injustice."

This idea grows apace in his mind, and gives him no rest night or day; for Warren's face haunts him, and he has his own character to clear.

"If I write, asking for an interview, perhaps she will refuse it. I had better run down unannounced."

"He here!" exclaims Esme, nervously, when the domestic informs her of the laird's arrival.

"I wouldn't have Warren know for all the world; they might come to blows. Why does he not keep away?"

When he enters Esme's cold greeting abashes him, but he has not come to woo, only to depend on her, and he quickly recovers composure, saying,—

"I have a painful matter to speak of, Lady Croyland, or, believe me, I would not intrude upon you."

She gives a perceptible start, and flushes to the temples, wondering how he came to know she was Warren's wife, and falters nervously,—

"How did you learn that?"

"From your husband," he says, gravely.

"My husband! Then you know him?"

"Yes, from boyhood up till recently the world saw no truer friendship than ours; to-day he believes me so vile that my death could not wholly expiate my offence."

Esme is quick to gather the meaning of these words, and says with a little shudder,—

"You and he have quarrelled about me."

"Not exactly that; he forced it upon me so offensively that I had to defend myself."

"Not a duel, surely?"

"No it has not come to that yet."

"Nor ever must. Promise me not to meet him; he is my husband, father of my child; and I by keeping my secret back from you have, unwittingly, led up to deplorable results."

"Trust me, I shall not be tempted to forget how dear his life is to you, but cannot be convinced in some way of his injustice?"

"I shall not trouble myself about that; he is not worthy of a refutation. He refused to listen, but became accuser and judge in the same breath. For the future his life and mine are severed."

For a moment a wild hope enters MacIvor's heart that this English rose will be dearer to him in the future—that, freed from her present bonds, she will become his wife.

"But consider the many dreary years that will be before you, the harsh verdict of society; and let me convince Warren that he still possesses a wife and a friend whom he can take to his heart again!"

"I would not go through the ordeal again for worlds," returns Esme, firmly. "No, I am determined to renounce him once and for all."

"But your child?" he urges.

"Will not even bear his name, for in his mad, unreasoning jealousy he has tarnished it beyond recall."

"Then you will free yourself?"

"No, let him do that for me, but it is too fresh a wound to be probed too freely. I thank you for your devoted sympathy, and will always regret that through me your honour is unjustly defamed."

Like a drowning man catching at a straw he still lingers in the pretty sitting-room, his eyes looking wistfully on the woman he feels he loves better than life itself, and notes mechanically the scores of quaint curios brought from beyond the seas that lie scattered about; and he feels certain that the picture of the peerless woman, her soft white arm resting on a large ivory Chinese monster, with gleaming green eyes of emeralds, will never be effaced from his memory, for this interview may be the last he will be privileged to hold with her.

And a pang equal to the bitterness of death itself shoots through his heart, where her image is so faithfully engraven.

"How exquisitely lovely she is!" he thinks, as he devours every detail of her indoor robe, that clings around her in classic folds, that a sculptor would have gone crazy to chisel, the soft, rich ruby cashmere, with a patch of rosy pink ribbon here and there.

His eyes fasten on the knot at her throat, a simple thing in its way, but dear to him on life's continued journey, because the pretty colour will be associated with her.

After an awkward pause he says, winningly,—

"May I not see baby, Lady Croyland?"

"Yes, she is growing such a knowing little darling; I will ring for nurse."

With what delight he watches the expression of maternal joy and pride that surges into Esme's face when she takes her treasure from the nurse, and holds it up to him to admire.

This trivial circumstance shows him clearly that the despised, persecuted mother still loves the father of her child, and in his nobility of soul he resolves to spare no effort to end the humiliating estrangement.

After duly admiring and praising the little one he is fain to say "good-bye," for he can invent no excuse for remaining longer near her.

A lingering good-bye at the porch, her little hand in his, looking like a snow-drop clasped in an oak leaf, her eyes half veiled under his tender yearning glances.

"May I not be mediator?" he asks diffidently.

"No, the time for that has passed. Good-bye, and again remember we must go out of each other's lives."

"Heaven help me!" he thinks, as he turns sorrowfully away. "I go to a world of misery, of gloom, shut out from Eden, debarred from receiving one smile, one word, and yet he throws this pearl away that is beyond price to me."

Fate, as if on the watch to make further mischief out of appearances, induces Warren's mother to visit the cottage on this day of all others, and she comes plump upon Lord MacIvor at the little wayside station.

He tries to avoid her; but her Argus eyes defeat this, and sailing up to him, her jewelled glasses on her nose, says severely,—

"Just the man I want to see. Warren has told me all. How can you justify your conduct when I find you down here? I blush for you, Lord MacIvor. I am thankful your dear, lamented mother is not alive to know of your shame."

With these scathing reproaches, accompanied by a broadside of scornful glances, she leaves him utterly abashed and humiliated.

"By Jove! I'm getting into a deuce of a scrape! It only illustrates the old adage, 'give a dog a bad name and hang him!'"

Lady Croyland hires a fly and is driven to the pretty rustic cottage, and sneers involuntarily as she compares it with her palatial domain. "Adventurers, who beguiled my boy to his ruin!" she muses, as she approaches Esme's home. "No wonder she intrigued to leave such humble surroundings."

She knocks peremptorily, and is admitted by the staid old servant who has served the Dormars faithfully for thirty years.

"What name, madam?"

"This is my card," is the haughty rejoinder. "Is Miss Dormar at home?"

"My mistress, Lady Croyland, is at home, but I believe not to you; but I will inquire," replies the servant, with quiet dignity that galls the aristocrat to the quick.

"Insufferable insolence!" she mutters, "Lady Croyland indeed! She to dare assume that honoured title when she has so shamefully forfeited all right to it."

"Lady Croyland will not grant you an interview, as she is far from well, but the captain will see you, my lady," replies Jane. "Will you please step this way?"

"To what am I indebted for this visit, Lady Croyland?" asks the captain, courteously, as he places a chair for her.

"I came to see your daughter, who refuses to meet me," replies her ladyship, frigidly.

"My daughter is mistress of her own actions. I will deliver any message you may think fit to leave."

"I insist upon seeing her in person; my business cannot concern you. If she is wise she will avoid a double scandal and possibly criminal proceedings: I have no desire to act harshly, especially under the circumstances."

"Lady Croyland, remember you are addressing her father, who does not thank you for your alleged leniency. What is it you require? Please be brief, and place the matter on a business footing, as all good fellowship between your house and mine has ceased."

His quiet, dignified protest awes the haughty dame somewhat, and she realises that the sturdy sailor will not listen patiently to her high and mighty views.

"My errand here is one that a third person can hardly interfere in."

"But surely that does not apply to me, her father?"

"Let me pencil a few lines to her, and if she deposes you to act in her behalf well and good. I do not wish to wound your feelings unnecessarily, being a parent myself."

"Certainly; here are writing materials," he says, opening a cedar writing-case of exquisite workmanship, and sweet aromatic

odour, that does not escape her keen observation; and she feels that what she thought a very humble abode is stored with costly treasures from every clime.

She wrote as follows:—

"Lady Croyland has come to request the return of her diamonds, to save exposure. If Miss Dormar does not accede to her just request she will be compelled to take other steps."

In a few moments after the delivery of the hastily-penned offensive missive Esme enters, and confronts her mother-in-law with a frown as black as midnight.

(To be continued.)

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

MARY STUART, daughter of James V. of Scotland and Mary of Lorraine, was born at Linlithgow, December 8, 1542, eight days previous to the death of her father. When she was six years old she was affianced to Francis, the Dauphin of France, in which country she was educated as a Roman Catholic.

Ten years afterwards she was married, with all the honours of the French Court. In the following year, 1559, Henry II. died, and Francis became king, as Francis II. By this event Mary became Queen of Scotland and France.

She also claimed the throne of England after the death of Queen Mary, and took the title of Queen of England and Scotland, basing her claim upon the fact that her father James V. of Scotland was a son of James IV. and Princess Margaret, daughter of Henry VII. of England, and that Henry VIII. had disowned Elizabeth.

Unfortunately, Francis lived only a year after his coronation, and the French Crown fell to Charles IX.

After his death Mary returned to Scotland. In 1565 she was married to Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, a man of vile habits, but a friend and relative of Queen Elizabeth, with whom Mary desired to be at peace.

She soon, however, became disgusted with her dissolute husband, and in his stead admitted into her councils Rizzio, an Italian adventurer of marked ability in some respects, but unpopular with the Scotch nobility and people.

In time Darnley and several young nobles seized Rizzio in the queen's presence, dragged him from her table, and assassinated him.

The queen effected the punishment of the murderers, except her husband, to whom she apparently became reconciled; but as he was killed soon after this by an explosion of gunpowder beneath the house in which he lay sick, and three months afterwards she was married to Bothwell, the chief conspirator against her husband, she was accused of consenting to the assassination.

A rebellion was raised, Bothwell was defeated at Carberry, and Mary was captured and compelled to abdicate. Escaping from Lochleven Castle, May 2nd, 1568, she rallied about her a new army, which was soon defeated and dispersed, and Mary fled to England, supplicating aid of Elizabeth.

That queen, however, had never forgiven Mary for claiming her throne.

The fugitive queen was put under arrest, and for nearly nineteen years was imprisoned, until February 1st, 1567, when, having been charged, on slight grounds, with plotting against the peace of the realm, and having been after a prejudiced hearing found guilty, she was ruthlessly executed.

AY, that's the word—punctuality! Did you ever see a man who was punctual who did not prosper in the long run? We don't care who or what he was—high or low, ignorant or learned, savage or civilised—we know that if he did as he agreed, and was punctual in all his engagements, he prospered.

LATE HOURS.

In the city, our evening amusements always begin and end too late. The usual hours of our operatic, theatrical, and other entertainments are from eight to twelve o'clock. The consequence is, that those who frequent them are hardly in their beds before the next day begins to point. They are thus deprived of the quantity of sleep essential to health, which requires about eight hours of it for a grown-up person.

The old may not want so much, but the very young demand a great deal more. Now, it is not age, but youth which mainly indulges in these late amusements, and thus those to whom the most sleep is necessary get the least.

Though there may be a few of these young people who can borrow from the day what they have spent on the night, the large majority have no such spare fund of time to draw upon. All that they give to the late entertainments they take from sleep, and their health suffers accordingly.

There is no more common cause of physical injury to our youth than late hours. Sleep is necessary for vigorous health. We doubt whether there are ten in a hundred of our busiest young men who are fairly asleep before midnight.

We are sure that the vast majority of them lose, almost every night of their lives, two hours at least of sleep. The loss is ordinarily more than the absolute time they are out of bed, for, when wakefulness is unduly prolonged, a nervous restlessness is apt to ensue, which is fatal to soundness of slumber. This prolongation of the day far into the night not only deprives us of the beneficent influence of natural sleep, but engenders in all the vital functions of the body a morbid activity which wastes and very soon wears it out.

No one can fail to have remarked, especially in the young, how all their faculties seem quickened when some unusual cause of wakefulness makes them forgetful of bedtime.

Persons who are habitually stupid at ten o'clock, will thus become animated by an unwonted intelligence at midnight. It is not only the intellectual faculties which are stimulated by an inordinate wakefulness, but every corporeal organ is roused to an unnatural degree of activity. The appetites and desires are sharpened to an excessive eagerness, and their gratification becomes irresistible.

For example, who has not observed how late hours provoke indulgence in eating and drinking? Who has not been conscious at the midnight supper of a hunger and thirst which the repasts of the day have failed to excite? This is, of course, a fastness of living fatal to good health and long life. By thus increasing its speed we shorten it. While doubling the days by adding the nights to them, we diminish proportionately their number.

The race of mankind would perish did they cease to aid each other. From the time that the mother binds the child's head, till the moment some assistant wipes the death-damp from the brow of the dying, we cannot exist without mutual help. All, therefore, that need aid have a right to ask it from their fellow-mortals. No one who holds the power of granting it can refuse it without guilt.

A MRAQUE LANGUAGE.—The language of the Terra del Flegians contains no word for any number above three; the people are unable to distinguish one colour from another; they have no religion and no funeral rites; and they possess neither chiefs nor slaves. Their only weapons are bone-pointed spears; they grow neither fruit nor vegetables; and, as their country is naturally barren, they are obliged to live entirely on animal food. But they are not cannibals; they ill-treat neither their women nor their old people, and they are monogamous.

A LOST DAY.

How many tasks I planned at dawn!
I said: "When this fair day has gone
And I sit down at eventide
To count the work my hands have done
Between the rise and set of sun
I shall be fully satisfied."

And then I wove a web of dreams,
And hours slipped by like sunny streams
Unnoted in their happy flight.
And when I roused myself, at last,
To act, I found the day was past,
And sunset fading into night.

Oh foolish dreams, oh wasted day!
This, and this only, can I say—
"Not one good deed my hands have done."
But much I might have done, had I
But used the hours as they passed by
But I have squandered every one.

God gives his days for us to use
For some good purpose. If we choose
To squander them, how great our sin!
I shudder, when I think he keeps
A record of them all, and weeps
To see the misspent hours therein.

Oh ye who give to dreams God's hours,
A serpent lurks beneath the flowers,
Of idle moods and weak delay:
Rouse! make to-morrow's record fair.
Be this the angel's entry there,
"To-day atones for yesterday."

E. E. R.

ALL AMONG THE HEATHER.

CHAPTER XXI.

A MORNING AT TREBARTHA.

ELFIE had experienced so many changes during the last few months, and had met with so much to pain and surprise her, that when she opened her eyes at Trebartha Castle the morning after her arrival, she wondered vaguely and drowsily whether she was really awake or only dreaming.

She had disappointed Mrs. Penfold the previous night by saying that her room was comfortable enough; now she found that it might more correctly be termed magnificent.

The shape and properties of the room were striking.

Not only was it exceedingly large, but one end of it was rounded outwards, and three windows, with more stonework than glass about them, filled this side of the apartment. Although a large fire had been made up when she went to bed, it had long since burned out, and the room felt very cold; so cold, indeed, that it required some resolution to spring up and dress herself.

"I miss the early cup of tea that I used to get at Monkshill," she thought, with a little sigh; "and I don't like to order it here, lest they should think I am giving unnecessary trouble."

But as the thought passed through her mind she heard a light tap at her door, and on opening it, she found Tamzen standing with a tray in her hand, upon which was a large cup of tea and a thin slice of bread-and-butter.

"Oh! that is what I was just wishing for," Elfie said, impulsively; "and I'll have some hot water to wash in, please—I feel half frozen!"

"Do you now, dear? I'll light the fire. It's fine and cold this morning; it's a hard frost, and the snow won't melt. There, now, that'll burn; and I'll bring you the hot water. It's as much as you'll do to keep warm to-day!"

Elfie smiled. It was not the first time she had been addressed as "dear" since her brief

sojourn in Cornwall, and she was beginning to observe that it was their ordinary way of speaking when people meant to be kind to her.

As soon as she was dressed she went to the windows, drew up the blinds, and there stood lost in wonder, not unmixed with awe, at the wild grandeur of sea and land which lay before her.

She stood here so long, and she was so lost in bewilderment at the strange feeling that filled her heart, that she forgot the flight of time.

She did not hear the door open, nor a voice call her the name under which she was here known by, and it was not until a hand was laid upon her arm that she turned and met the face of Mrs. Penfold, who was looking at her with gravely scrutinising eyes.

Elfie did not start, she did not appear surprised; she was rather like a person in a state of clairvoyance, who, with eyes open, seemed rather to be looking inward and reading what was written on her own brain than to take notice of what was passing on around her.

"Miss Heath, what is the matter with you?" asked Mrs. Penfold, a little anxiously.

"I seem to have seen it all before," replied the girl, closing her eyes tightly, as though the more clearly to recall some vague and far away memory.

Mrs. Penfold's countenance slightly changed, but she said, in a matter-of-fact tone,—

"You probably have seen the same view, though from another point before now. Scores of tourists come to Cornwall every year, and artists swarm over the place, till they must have carried away every rock and fern and bit of lichen on canvas."

"No, it isn't that; I feel that I have really been here. It isn't that I have seen pictures of this view; no, it is something far back in my life like a nursery song. But it must be a mistake on my part. The place where I was found by the side of a dead woman was far away from here, and I cannot say that I have a distinct memory of that event, and I can remember nothing before it."

"You were found by the side of a dead woman?" repeats Mrs. Penfold, and her lips become parched, and her tongue seems to cleave to the roof of her mouth.

"Yes," is the absently-uttered reply.

"Where?" asks the elder lady.

"On the Shirley Hills, in Surrey," answered Elfie, as though she were under the influence of the mesmerist.

"The woman, you say, was dead?" continued Mrs. Penfold, with seeming calmness. "Were there any papers, or money, or ornaments found upon her?"

"I don't know," was the still dreamy reply; "but there could not have been, because they would have sent me to the Union if the kind gentleman who found me had not taken me to his own home, and adopted me as his own child."

"And you know nothing more about the woman who died when you were with her?" questioned the mistress of Trebartha, anxiously.

"No," replied Elfie, with a sigh; "except that she was old—old enough to be my grandmother, I have been told."

"And you remember nothing of her yourself?" asked her companion.

But the girl shook her head, breathed a deep sigh, and then roused herself, as though from an unnatural sleep.

"I cannot imagine what has come over me," she said, a few seconds afterwards, in her usual tone. "This place gives me such strange fancies and feelings; but you want your breakfast, Mrs. Penfold, and I have been keeping you here in the cold."

"I am never kept by anyone where I don't want to stay," was the somewhat ungracious answer; "but, come along; you are hungry, no doubt; young people always are hungry."

Then she led the way from the room, feeling well assured that she would learn nothing more at present about Elfie's early days.

Breakfast was served in the same room in which they had dined the previous night, and the young lady, from where she sat, could look out of the windows.

But they commanded no extensive view like those of her bedroom. They were on another side of the Castle, and had only before them a walled garden, now completely covered with snow.

This garden in tempestuous weather was the only place in which the inmates of the Castle could take exercise, for on two sides of the wall there was a covered promenade, on which were always to be found a few rough garden chairs.

The two ladies ate their breakfast almost in silence. They had both of them much to think about; and the large fire made the room warm and enjoyable.

When she had finished, Mrs. Penfold took a seat by the fire, and advised Elsie to follow her example.

"I hope you won't find this room as stuffy as Mrs. Maltby's study," said the old lady, with a smile; "but if you do, there is the rest of the Castle open to you, though I am afraid some parts of it will be unpleasantly cold."

"I think this room is very cosy," returned Elsie; "but we don't get a view of the sea from it," she added, regretfully, "and I confess that the restless water has a fascination for me."

"We get quite enough of the sea at Trebartha, my dear, as you will find before the winter is over," replied the old lady, with a harsh laugh; "and as for the wind, it is often so strong that you can't stand against it, and in a storm you will be inclined to fear that the Castle is going to tumble about your ears."

Elsie laughed, for this kind of thing was quite outside her experience, and she would at the present moment have infinitely preferred roaming about and exploring the Castle and neighbourhood to sitting in this room, with nothing more romantic in her immediate surroundings than if she had been living in London.

"What are you going to do with yourself to-day?" asked Mrs. Penfold, after a while.

"That will depend upon you," replied Elsie.

"What would you like me to do?"

"Anything that pleases yourself," was the answer.

"Have you any letters for me to write?" asked Elsie.

"No. I don't favour my friends with many letters, and what they do get I write myself."

"Is there any sewing that you would like me to do?" was the more hesitating question.

"There are plenty of fingers to sew without yours or mine troubling themselves," responded Mrs. Penfold, sharply. "Perran works for me; Tamzen will sew for you, she will look after your wardrobe, too; you only have to amuse yourself, and sometimes to amuse me."

"How shall I amuse you this morning?" asked Elsie, trying to smile and to speak lightly.

"By taking care of yourself?" was the answer. "I don't feel inclined to move from here for a while, and then I have a good many things to attend to; but you can go for a walk, or get a book from the library, only take care of yourself if you go out. We are about four hundred feet above the sea, and you wouldn't be worth pulling out if you were blown into it. Until you know the locality I think you had better take Tamzen with you."

But Elsie was inclined to take her first walk alone, and she said as much; then she went off to her own room to dress for it.

It was not until she got out of Trebartha Castle that she realised what a fine battlemented structure the building really was. And now she saw that only one wing was in general use, though the part which was closed up did not show any signs of decay.

"I suppose the Penfolds were people of im-

portance in their day," she thought, as she began to descend the steep carriage drive by which they had arrived on the previous night; "but I am deplorably ignorant of the history of this part of the world. My object now is to get to the sea, and certainly this road does not lead to it."

She paused, looked about her, unconscious that a servant had been deputed to follow her to warn her of danger; and perceiving an opening in the stone "hedges," as they are here called, which looked like a narrow lane leading back in the direction of the castle, though not close to it, she took the turning and walked on, until the winding path brought her to the edge of a cliff.

Involuntarily an exclamation of delight, not unmixed with fear, escaped her, for she looked upon a scene which she might have searched the world in vain to rival.

Twenty miles of cliff, a hundred of rolling water, a score or more of bays, each with their own golden sands and gleaming promontory, all lay stretched before her; and she, giddy with the sight, and realising more vividly than when she was in the castle the immense height of the cliffs on which she stood, leaned her arms upon the stone hedge, and bent her head in humble and mute adoration of the great Creator.

The stone hedges in Cornwall have rarely or never any mortar or cement in them.

As a rule, they are unshewn blocks of sandstone, slate, serpentine, granite, or conglomerate, according to the geological formation of the immediate locality; and these, with little regard to size, are piled one upon another, until a wall the required height, and some two or three feet wide, is made; loose earth is then thrown over the whole, and nature does the rest.

The rain comes, and the frost, and the snow, and the seasons change; the stones stand by their own weight, the once loose earth, and the weeds and grasses that spring up, bind them together, and so long as the land upon which they are built does not give way, they may remain here, and be used as paths, as well as fences, for ages.

But the land on this iron-bound coast is always being worn away.

No matter how bold a front the cliffs may present, no matter how stubbornly they resist the inroad of their enemy, century by century finds some change, though it be but the change of a few inches, or a few feet, and so the work goes on.

This stone wall, against which Elsie was leaning, was not the first of the kind that had been built round the seaward side of Trebartha Castle.

The cliff had been slowly but surely worn away, as its base had sunk like a huge monster falling upon its own knees, and all that was superincumbent had sunk with it. One of these stone hedges had disappeared into the sea; the second was now tottering on the very verge of the precipice, some portion of it being already gone, while the intervening field was so steep as to be practically useless to man or beast, and this third hedge had been built some twenty years ago as a necessary precaution for the coast-guards, one of whom was usually to be found in the neighbourhood of Trebartha.

The stones of the hedge must have previously felt a great downward attraction, for Elsie was not leaning heavily against them; but she suddenly felt as though she were sliding forward, and the instinct of self-preservation made her fling herself backwards, just as the big stones tumbled one after another down the steep slope to the wall still hanging over the abyss, a portion of which in their mad career they carried into the sea with them.

"That was a narrow escape, miss," said the man who had followed her.

"It was indeed," gasped the girl, still pale with terror. "Does this kind of thing often happen?" she asked, nervously.

"Not often, miss. This wall has stood for

twenty years, but it's bound to go just as Trebartha herself is bound to go, sooner or later."

He looked affectionately at the castle as he spoke, as though he had an affection for the very stones of which it was built.

Elsie had in a measure recovered from her fright by this time. Something in the old man's voice and manner interested her, and she felt curious to ask a few questions which it was probable he could answer.

"What is the name of that patch of yellow sand down there?" she asked, pointing to what looked like a tiny bay.

"That is Trebartha Steps," he replied. She repeated the name, wonderingly.

"It goes by that name because it used to be got at by steps," he volunteered; "but there's another way round that is easier to get by, and there's wonderful caves down there, some that go nobody knows where. 'Tis a wonderful place is Trebartha Steps, but it won't do for you to go there alone, miss."

"No, I don't think it will," replied Elsie, with a smile. "Indeed, I think this one adventure has been quite enough for this morning."

Then she thanked him for the information he had given her, and she retraced her steps to the castle.

She went direct to her own room, still feeling greatly unnerved by the falling away of a portion of the wall upon which she had been leaning.

Also the memory of the cliffs, and of the immense height above the sea at which she was living, exercised an almost painful influence over her; while that strange, haunting feeling that she had expressed to Mrs. Penfold of having seen it all before in some former phase of existence grew stronger instead of weaker, as she saw more of Trebartha.

"I won't give way to this," she said to herself, resolutely, as she turned from the window and took off her hat. "If I stand looking over the cliffs like this I shall at last find their influence too great for my powers of resistance, and shall end by flinging myself over them. No! I'll go to the library and get a stirring novel, and forget my own perplexities in reading about those of other people. Ah, me! I wonder what Colonel Denison is thinking of!"

Her thoughts were still full of the high cliffs, and of the guardian who had not recognised her; and she left the room and walked down a corridor to the door which had been pointed out to her as leading into the library.

She had every reason to suppose that Mrs. Penfold was still in the room in which they had had breakfast.

And, without having been exactly told so she quite understood that, besides the mistress of the castle and herself, there were only servants in the place.

So she opened the door and walked into a large, though not too well-lighted, room, the walls of which were covered with shelves and cases filled with books, with the exception of two large panels between three windows, upon which hung two life-size portraits in oil.

If Elsie's mind had not been so completely occupied, she would have looked about this room with more curiosity than she now showed, and she would perhaps have wondered to see a large fire burning in the grate. But this did not occur to her.

The cliffs still exercised a fascination for her. She remembered how the big stones had bounded down the steep incline till the sound of their fall was lost to her straining ear, and she now walked straight to one of the windows to look out, and see if from here she could get a view of the spot.

"Miss Heath!"

The voice was the voice of a man—a voice, too, which at one time she had known but too well; and with a start of terror, rather than of fear, she turns and meets the knavish, but impassioned gaze of Clarence Maltby.

"Miss Heath, forgive me; let us be friends."

he says, with seeming contrition; and he holds out his hand, not aggressively, but as one sincerely suing for pardon.

It is not in Elsie's heart to be really hard and unforgiving to anyone, but her womanly instinct and maiden modesty warn her to beware of Clarence, and she is turning away without uttering a word when a cry of involuntary surprise escapes her.

She sees her own face and her own figure before her, not reflected in a looking-glass, but seeming to be walking out of a picture-frame; and some of the same terror that had seized Mrs. Penfold and Perran when they first met her in London came over herself now, and though she did not faint she shrank from the portrait with absolute fear, for it seemed to her united imagination that she was actually looking upon her own death.

CHAPTER XIII.

ELFIE'S SORROW AND RECOVERY.

When Charlie first woke the morning after the ball, and remembered what she had said to Elsie, she felt thoroughly ashamed of herself. Never in her life had she so completely lost her temper.

The loss of dignity involved in quarrelling with a girl, and threatening to turn her out of her house because the man whom she herself loved had proposed honourable marriage to her, was very great; indeed, and it was increased rather than lessened by the fact that the girl had refused the offer of the man in question.

"I shall be laughed at and sneered at by everybody who hears of my insane conduct," she reflected, miserably; "I shall become a byword to the whole county if Elsie goes away now. No, she must not go. I can never again love her as I have loved her, that is not possible, though the fault is none of hers; but I must tolerate her until this affair has blown over; and I may get her married to young Carew or to that man with whom she talked and danced so much last night. And now I must eat some very unpalatable humble pie, or my lady will take herself off, for she is as proud as Lucifer."

After this she made an effort to rise, but her limbs ached, partly with fatigue, but principally from a bad cold which she had caught in coming home the previous night.

Then she yawned, for she had not slept well; her conscience had been too uneasy for that, and the aching pain that gnawed her heart told her only too ruthlessly that even though Harry Kingswood cared nothing for her she cared far too much for him.

She was never in a hurry to begin a task that is distinctly disagreeable.

Charlie told herself that she must get up and must say something apologetic to Elsie before breakfast, but her reluctance to do either was so great that it was more than an hour after she resolved to do so before she began to act upon her resolution.

Then she rang for her bath to be got ready, and she was slow in dressing, so that it was not far from midday before she slowly made her way to the room which Elsie had hitherto occupied.

She did not know what to say or how to begin her apologetic discourse, for she did not wish to confess herself altogether in the wrong, and she had no manner of doubt that Elsie was justly indignant at the manner in which she had been snubbed, and had received notice to quit.

"I suppose I should have been very angry if I had been in her place," thought Charlie, as she tapped at the bedroom door; "indeed, I knew I should. Of course, I have been wrong, and I may as well say so frankly, and ask her to forgive me."

Then she knocked again, and receiving no answer, opened the door.

The room was empty of living occupant. True, the bed had been slept in, and the tray, with a cup, saucer, and plate on it, showed that Elsie, like herself, had had her early tea.

But the appearance of two large trunks, locked and addressed, though not corded, told the young mistress of Monkhill that she was going to be taken at her word, and that Elsie had made every preparation for leaving the house.

"She is waiting downstairs for me, I suppose," she sighed. "I almost wish she would go without saying a word. I never in my life felt so small and contemptible as I do now."

This state of feeling was as unlike Charlie's normal condition that it could not long continue, and she roused herself and went to seek the injured girl, intending to say a few words of apology and to treat the whole affair as a bit of bad temper on her own part, occasioned by over-fatigue.

On reaching the hall her eyes involuntarily glanced at the table, upon which letters and cards were often left, and in another moment she held Elsie's parting note in her hand.

Her hastily-avowed wish was gratified—there would be no painful scene, no unpleasant leave-taking; Elsie was gone, and the tone of the letter she had left behind showed Charlie how harshly she had been treated.

"And she has gone without any money?" was Charlie's first thought.

"She has gone to Isolt Greatrex," was her second, "and she will tell her how I have ill-used her, and she will excite her sympathy, and probably end by becoming her step-mother. But, no, it is unjust of me to say that. Elsie is not mercenary, and in this matter I have not believed her to be."

She went into the breakfast-room and took her seat at the head of the table, but she was alone.

Mrs. Ridgeway had sent an apology for her absence. She had caught a severe cold at the ball, and was afraid she would have to send for the doctor, so Charlie was left to entertain herself.

Her first impulse had been to order Elsie's boxes to be sent off without delay to London, and to take no further notice of the letter, beyond sending a cheque for the salary due.

But kinder feelings, upon asserted themselves. She was naturally just and generous.

In her heart she was fond of Elsie, and though this feeling was rather kept in the background at present it had its influence on her future conduct.

It was not, however, till late in the afternoon that she resolved to telegraph to Elsie, saying there had been a great misunderstanding, and asking her to return.

A letter would have reached Palace-gardens almost as soon as this telegram, because a groom had to ride to Tiverton with it before it could be sent; but Charlie was in no humour to write a letter, and she fancied also that it would not meet with the same prompt attention, for she had ordered the groom to pay for a reply.

No reply came, but this was not wonderful.

There would be sure to be one the next day, however, and Charlie slept soundly that night, feeling that she had done all that could be expected of her to atone for her hasty words.

The snow which Elsie had first observed as she was on her way to Cornwall had not been partial, and it had come down so heavily in the neighbourhood of Monkhill that Charlie, when she looked through her window the next morning, felt very sure that Elsie would not travel from London that day.

Mrs. Ridgeway still kept her bed, and Charlie was not only thrown on her own resources, but had no one at all to whom she could freely express the thoughts that were in her mind.

Considering the state of the weather she was not a little surprised in the afternoon to see a carriage drive up to the house, and two gentlemen alight.

There were two, she knew, but she had only eyes for one.

She felt very angry with him. It would have been a great relief to her feelings to have

been able to fling one of the sofa cushions at his head; but she would not under any consideration have declined to see the culprit.

Pride alone would have kept her from doing that, and in her heart there was still the hope that Harry Kingswood would yet learn to love her.

Learn! There was no learning needed, she assured herself—he loved her. She was convinced before Elsie came in his way that he loved her, and now she was gone he would surely return to his first love.

A very pretty way of putting the matter, though its accuracy might well be doubted; but Charlie's love was stronger than her pride, and she would not refuse Harry if he proposed to her, even though she knew he had been refused by Elsie.

He did not know that she knew it, of that she was well aware, and she determined that the knowledge should never reach him.

She shook hands with him and with Mr. Denison when they came into the drawing-room, and then she began to talk about the weather and to express her wonder at their venturing out on such a day.

"Well, the fact is, the guests at Trevelyan Court are all going away, we among the number; and I—that is, Denison—wanted to see Miss Heath, and I thought I should like to say good-bye to you before leaving the neighbourhood."

"It's very kind of you," said Charlie, a trifle bitterly. "I suppose you are not going to the Antipodes?"

"Well, I don't know," he replied, awkwardly. "It may be a very long time before we meet again."

Charlie's face became very pale, and she bit her lips to try to keep some colour in them.

"How is Miss Heath?" asked Denison, who again and again had looked at the door, expecting Elsie to appear.

"I—I don't know; very well, I think," replied Charlie, awkwardly.

They had both of them come to see Elsie, that was but too clear, and they had only asked for her because she was the mistress of the house.

"You don't know! Isn't she here?" asked Lionel Denison, with sudden alarm.

"No, she went to London yesterday," was the answer.

"She told me that I was sure to find her here," asserted Lionel, in a tone which made Charlie open her eyes, then say calmly, and with some displeasure,—

"That was a very extraordinary statement to make."

"It did not appear so at the time," replied Mr. Denison, speaking more calmly, and with some dignity; "but perhaps you will tell me where Miss Heath is to be found?"

"Oh, yes, certainly; I have no desire to hide Miss Heath," she returned, with scarcely veiled anger.

"What is it?" she asked, sharply, turning to a servant who came into the room.

The man presented a telegram on a salver and retired, and Charlie, though she longed to read it, threw it carelessly on the table by her side.

"Was there ever such self-denial?" asked Harry Kingswood, with a laugh. "Don't let us keep you from enjoying the contents of that mysterious envelope."

Something in his glance, she knew not what, seemed to dare her to read the telegram before he went away, and she accepted the mute challenge and opened it.

But when she had read the message her eyes swam, the paper fell from her trembling hand, and she would have fallen but for the cushions that supported her.

Kingswood caught up a fan and tried to revive her by its aid, and both of the gentlemen eagerly asked what ailed her.

She pointed to the paper, and said,—

"Read."
And Lionel Denison did so.
The message was sent from Miss Greatrex



["WHAT IS THE NAME OF THAT PATCH OF YELLOW SAND DOWN THERE?" ASKED ELFIE.]

Palace-gardens, Kensington, to Miss Birch, Monkshill, Devon, and ran as follows:—

"Elfie is not here; has not been here, neither do I expect her. Your telegram is an enigma to me."

"Elfie!" repeated Lionel Denison, his face agitated, and with a look in his eyes which seemed to demand an explanation, "who is Elfie?"

"Miss Heath," replied Charlie, faintly.

"Impossible!" said Lionel, answering the thought in his own mind, rather than speaking to her.

And he hid his face in his hands for a time, as though the bare suggestion were too much for him.

"There is nothing impossible about it," retorted Charlie, rousing herself; "Elfie is Miss Heath's Christian name; she went away yesterday morning before I was down, and she left a note behind her saying she was going to Miss Greatrex, and desiring me to send her luggage after her. I telegraphed yesterday begging her to return, and this is the answer."

"And where is she?" asked Kingswood, curiously.

Charlie shrugged her shoulders.

She was sincerely anxious about her ill-used friend, but she was not pleased to see that anxiety shared by Mr. Kingswood.

"Will you let me look at the letter which Miss Heath left behind her?" asked Denison, at length.

"Certainly not," was the emphatic answer, "the letter concerned only Miss Heath and myself."

Lionel Denison took out some letters and papers from his own pocket, and selecting what he wanted, he looked long and earnestly at a girl's photograph.

"It is like, and yet unlike," he said, musingly. Then handing it to Charlie, he asked, "Do you know that face, Miss Birch?"

"Of course I do," was the immediate rejoinder; "it is a portrait of Miss Heath. I saw one like it in her desk the other day, and

I remarked then how greatly she had changed since it was taken."

"Then I have found her!" exclaimed Lionel, while his handsome face became illuminated with joy. "Just imagine, Kingswood, that I should spend a whole evening with the poor child, and yet should not recognise her. I wonder if she recognised me?"

"How should she?" returned the other brusquely; "you have told me she was a baby when you last saw her."

"So she was; but she must have known the name. Yes, yes, I fear she must have recognised me."

"Fear!" repeated Kingswood aggressively. He did not at all like the turn affairs had taken, and he felt inclined to be very disagreeable.

But Lionel paid no heed to his remark. He turned to Charlie and said,—

"Miss Birch, I throw myself upon your good nature to help me to find Elfie. She belongs to me. I found her when she was a very little child, half buried in heather, by the side of a dead woman. I adopted her, and though I have been very many years abroad I have had her well educated and tenderly cared for. From a mistaken belief that she was an obstacle to my happiness she left my house on the day of my return to England, and from that hour to this I have sought her in vain."

"And are you the guardian of whom she sometimes speaks as though he were some demi-god?" asked Charlie, incredulously.

His face flushed, but he made no answer except to ask earnestly,—

"You will help me to find her?"

"Of course I will," was the prompt reply: "tell me what I can do."

"You can tell me why she went away," he returned; "that will be the first step towards finding her."

Charlie blushed, and her face became troubled.

She would not so much mind telling Lionel

Denison why she quarrelled with Elfie, but Harry Kingswood must never know it.

And just then Kingswood said confidently, "Yes, you must tell us, Charlie; we'll find her, wherever she is."

"Finding her will be my work," said Lionel Denison quietly, but firmly; "she belongs to me, and I don't want your help, Kingswood."

"In that case I'll take myself off," was the offended retort, and he would have been as good as his word if Charlie had not said quickly,—

"No, don't go. I have something important to tell you, and you will find a fire in the library, if you will wait there a little while."

And Kingswood went thither in no good humour.

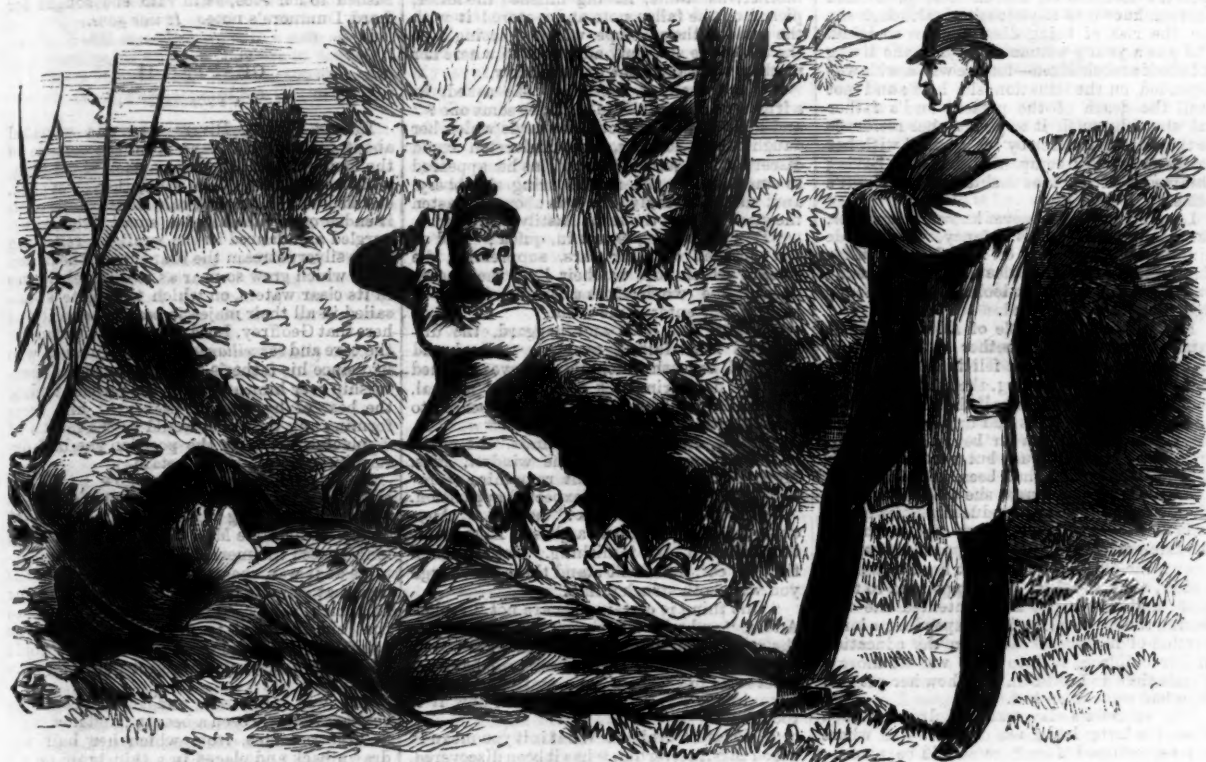
"I don't trust him," said Lionel, as he left the room; "he recognised Elfie, he knew who she was—I feel sure that he did; and he never told me."

Charlie was of the same opinion, but she did not give expression to her thoughts, for she felt that circumstances were working in her favour.

"Certainly she would do all in her power to help Mr. Denison to find Elfie and to keep her, too."

(To be continued.)

If instructors would administer to the self-respect of those they instruct by showing that they respect them; if they would glance more lightly over their faults and emphasise their excellencies; if they would take pains to honour the faculties they put forth and to draw forth yet latent powers, thus producing a sense of strength and hope, instead of despair and recklessness, they would often be surprised to find the faults on which they had dwelt so urgently and vainly dropping insensibly away under the wholesome influence of an increasing force of character. The evil has been overcome with good.



[“GEOFFREY! OH, HEAVENS! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?” CRIED ADDIE.]

NOVELLETTE.]

FOR HIS SAKE ALONE.

CHAPTER I.

HAREBELL COTTAGE.

THERE was quite an assemblage of people on the lawn which sloped from the windows of Harebell Cottage, as Mrs. Melverton's place was called, and the bright June sun poured his soft warm rays on the chairs, tables, couches, drawers, and every imaginary article of household furniture which was there displayed, amid the perfume of June roses, whilst men were still busily engaged in bringing out some of the more costly treasures to be viewed by intending purchasers, and those who had no intention of becoming such, as the auctioneer's hammer fell with the word “gone,” when, one after another, they exchanged ownership.

From the lower room where the French window opened on to the green grass, an elderly lady was watching the proceedings with eyes which told of the sorrow with which she saw her household gods being taken from her.

By her side, endeavouring to comfort her, was a girl of maybe twenty summers, with one white rounded arm thrown round her neck, as she ever and anon made some cheering remark, to soothe the other in her distress.

“Never mind, mother,” she said; “after all, they are only things we can replace at any time when the tide turns.”

“Ah! my dear,” returned Mrs. Melverton, “when the tide turns, but where is the prospect, my child?”

“Why, am I not young and strong?—and you know, mother mine, I am not quite a fool, am I?” and the girl laughed as she passed her hand over the silvery locks. “I can teach English, French, German, Italian; I can draw, play, sing, and paint, and its strange

if I can't earn enough to be able to keep a roof over our heads;” but the former only sighed as she thought how little such accomplishments would be valued, and still the buzz of the buyers and the sound of the auctioneer's hammer fell as a death-blow on her ears.

“Now, ladies and gentlemen, what for this lot?” said the former, as they all fell back, whilst men in their shirt sleeves unfolded a large velvet pile carpet—“£10?”

“£5,” says a big, fat farmer, as he pushed forward to have a better view of the bargain.

“Lor', bless the man,” says the auctioneer, “it wasn't bought for twenty, and is as good as new.”

“I'll give eleven,” and a gentleman of about thirty looked over the former's shoulder, so irritating that individual that he immediately shouted “twelve” in a rage.

“Thirteen,” said the former.

“Fourteen,” cried the farmer, to the amusement of the bystanders, as not until it had reached the twenties would he surrender the purchase to the other.

“Don't you know who he is?” asked one woman of another, as the hammer fell. “Why, it's Lord Dunmore, of Linden Court, and he's bought most all—what for Heaven only knows; but here he comes, so mum's the word,” and the ladies had a lively bid, one against the other, for a box of odd crockery and kitchen utensils, as the object of their conversation passed on to the cottage.

He was exceedingly handsome, with laughing hazel eyes, which appeared greatly to have enjoyed the fight their owner had had for possession of the carpet, which was now being borne behind him to the house, and as he raised his hat in acknowledgment to the ladies, he passed the window where Addie and her mother were still seated.

A deep flush suffused the face of the young girl as Lord Dunmore went by, which had scarce faded from her cheek as a few minutes later he entered the room.

“Pardon me, Mrs. Melverton,” he said, as

he shook hands with both, “but I am come to ask a favour.”

“A favour! my lord,” replied the former, “I fear I have but few left to extend; what is it?”

“Well, in the first instance, I am going to ask you if you will allow the men to replace the carpet they took this morning from your drawing-room, ditto the furniture which I have purchased in the several rooms to which it belongs, also—”

“But, surely, Lord Dunmore,” Mrs. Melverton exclaimed, “you must be aware that I am no longer mistress of Harebell Cottage, and have no power to grant your request. To-night my daughter and I leave here for ever.”

“Now, that is just what I don't want you to do,” said his lordship. “You must know the cottage is mine, and the rest of the favour is, will you take care of it for me, well—until you are tired, and I must get someone else?”

Mrs. Melverton raised her eyes to the young man before her, as a light broke in upon her.

“I know what it is,” she cried, “but it's just like you, my lord, it's just like you; how can I ever repay you? And so we shall not leave the old place, after all; thank Heaven! thank Heaven!” and she buried her face in her hands, as the tears gushed through her fingers.

“And have you nothing to say, Addie?” he asked, as he advanced to where the girl remained by the side of her mother; but her answer was inaudible, as a man now advanced to ask his lordship where the goods should be placed.

Mrs. Melverton had been housekeeper at Linden Court in the time of the old lord, and all through the stages of infancy, boyhood and youth, until he had arrived at his present estate of manhood, she had been the refuge in every scrape and trouble in which the son found himself, to which he flew.

It was Mrs. Melverton who was ever ready to screen him from his father's displeasure; it was Mrs. Melverton who would surreptitious

open the door and let him in after prohibited hours unknown to the household, although she ran the risk of being dismissed for so doing. She was a young woman then, and the living of herself and children—for she was a widow—depended on the situation she held; and not until the death of the present lord's father did she relinquish it to take up her residence in the cottage left her by his "will," with her daughter for her companion, her own having obtained a situation as cashier in a merchant's office.

Lord Dunmore had never known his mother, she having died in his infancy, which made him more ready to rely on Mrs. Melverton for the motherly care and advice she was ever ready to give, until he never looked on her in any light but that of a friend.

He had seen but little of Addie until she came to live with her mother at the cottage, and then he straightway fell in love with her, thinking no one among the ladies of his acquaintance to possess half the charms of the girl whose simple ways and unadorned beauty seemed to attract him far beyond the studied graces of his own clique; but notwithstanding that Mrs. Melverton had been housekeeper at Linden Court, all knew she was of the unfortunate class known as reduced gentlewomen, as it was through the interest of a friend of the late nobleman, who in happier times had known the officer who had left her a penniless widow, that she had been appointed to that post; and very happy and contented she was during those years of office, expending a large portion of her liberal salary on the education of her children, and to none was it more a puzzle than to Lord Dunmore how her present ruin had come upon her.

The summer's day was fast drawing to a close, the latter had given orders as to where the repurchased furniture should be placed; and had it not been for bits of paper scattered over the green lawn, none would have known that but a few hours earlier the quiet peace surrounding the cottage had been disturbed by the noise and excitement attending the sale.

"And so you will not tell me, Mrs. Melverton, how it was that you were brought to these unpleasant straits?" said his lordship, as he was increasing the gloss of his hat by rubbing the sleeve of his coat over the same preparatory to departure.

"You must forgive me," was the reply; "but ungrateful as it may appear, I must beg of your lordship not to press me to do so."

"Rather I must beg your forgiveness for my seeming impertinence," he replied, as, noting the tears which started to the eyes of both mother and daughter, he pressed the hand of the latter, and saying he would see them on the morrow, bade them adieu; and the shadows grew longer and longer in the deepening gloom, as with each busy in her own thoughts, they still silently watched, until the young girl, who had been retained till the last moment to wait on them, entered with the lamp, previous to laying the cloth for the evening meal.

"Is this yours, miss?" she asked of Addie, as she cleared the table, and handed the latter a letter which had been left on the same.

"Lord Dunmore's writing! Mother, dear, what can it mean?" asked Addie, as she excitedly broke the seal; and drawing it from its enclosure she read the following, whilst a crisp bank note for £100 fluttered to the floor.

"DEAR MRS. MELVERTON,—

"Don't be cross; having no use for the enclosed I thought it might be useful to you; it is but a small portion of what I am in your debt. Trusting with all my heart that you will soon overcome your difficulties, and that the sun will again break through the clouds, believe me, your true friend,—

"GEOFFREY DUNMORE."

"He is, indeed, a noble fellow!" said her

mother, as Addie, having finished the letter, picked up the fallen note and restored it with the same to the envelope, when, replacing it on the table, she suddenly advanced to where her mother still sat by the open window.

"What was that, mother?" she asked, in a frightened tone. "Didn't you see some one?" and following the direction towards which her daughter was looking, Mrs. Melverton could discern the figure of a man, as he appeared to emerge from the neighbouring chamber, and, rising hastily, she was about to hasten the glass door as the same hastily advanced.

"Don't be fool, let me in, quick!" and as the voice fell on their ears, suppressing the screams which rose to their lips, they again opened the window, and a young fellow of twenty-four entered the room.

His face was pale and haggard, the dishevelled locks falling over his white forehead, beneath which his dark eyes gleamed with the despairing look of a hunted animal, whilst his tall, well-built form appeared to quiver with the dread of guilt.

"Quick, draw down the blinds," he cried, as Addie again fastened the window, Mrs. Melverton for the moment remaining completely paralysed by the unexpected apparition.

"Why, how you do look!" he said. "Any one would suppose I was a ghost! Here, come on, Addie, I am famishing. Get us something to eat, and don't stand there as though you were both struck dumb."

"One thing is certain, you are not," replied Addie, "and why do you come here to add to the sorrow you have already caused?"

"Why?" he repeated, "because I have nowhere else to go. Had you sent what I asked I would not have troubled you, but now it is too late."

"Too late, Cuthbert. What is it you mean?" asked Mrs. Melverton, "has it been discovered, then?"

"Yes, and the d—s are already on my track. I can't get away without money. Hark! what was that?" and hastily entering a cupboard by the fireplace, he closed it on him as a loud rat-tat resounded on the street door.

Momentarily he peered from his hiding-place. "Keep them talking as long as you can," he said, as mother and daughter hastened to the hall, where the little maid was in conversation with two men.

"It is useless to deny that he is here, madam," they said, as Mrs. Melverton, pale and trembling, endeavoured to assure them they were mistaken; whilst Addie, to whom this trouble had given courage, indignantly demanded by what right they dared to force their way into their house and at that hour.

"We are extremely sorry, young lady," replied one, "that our duty is such an unpleasant one; but here's our warrant, you see, and if you will allow us to go through the place we will not trouble you further," and closing the door behind them, they followed Mrs. Melverton and Addie to the room they had just left.

It was tenantless; they gave a professional glance around the same, advancing to the cupboard, as the excited flush which had dyed the girl's cheek banished, leaving her white as marble, whilst she almost feared the beating of her heart must be audible to their quick ears, as they opened the door to find it empty.

The search throughout the little cottage did not take long, and in a dissatisfied and disappointed tone, the officers bade the ladies good-night, as there was nothing left them now but to watch without for the bird which had so far eluded their grasp.

Yes, Cuthbert had fled—whither they knew not, but he was for the moment free, and Addie was about to congratulate herself on his escape, as a hasty tramp of feet without caused her to advance to the window and raise the blind just in time to see by the gleam of the moon the light agile form of the youth, as like a deer he fled from his pursuers, until he was lost in the distance, and the latter appeared uncertain how to proceed, and then she turned to where her mother still sat over her untasted supper, and the hot blood again

rushed to her face, as in vain she sought for Lord Dunmore's note. *It was gone.*

CHAPTER II.

A PROPOSAL.

LINDEN COURT, Riversdale, was situated about five miles distant from the cottage of the Melvertons. The house itself stood high, with broad terraces from which the velvet park, studded with beech and oak, sloped down until it ended on the banks of a small river, which gurgled and danced in the sunlight, reflecting in its silvery stream the branches of the lindens which grew so near as to dip their leaves in its clear waters, on which the white swans sailed in all their majestic beauty; and it was here that Geoffrey, Lord Dunmore, lived under the care and surveillance of a maiden aunt, who had since his father's death usurped the mentorship over him, and up to the present had, to the best of her ability, prevented him from forming any tie which would be the means of displacing her from the position she had determined, if possible, to retain.

As to any chance of ever now having an establishment of her own, over which to exert her sway, had long vanished from the breast of the Honourable Miss Garthorne; she had long passed the meridian of age, and, unpalatable as it was, she was obliged to swallow the fact that she was growing old; and being far from rich, composed herself to the assurance that she intended to make that old age as comfortable as she could, and where could she better carry out her object than at "The Court."

She was tall, stout, and in her best days could never have been a beauty; and now, with a large red face, from which her hair was drawn back and placed in a thin braid on the crown of her head, from the back of which the same process was continued, it was not a style that added to her latent charms, giving her more the appearance of a Chinese with his pigtail twisted up than anything else; and Geoffrey could not be blamed that at times he had a longing to see a more sybil-like form and a sweeter face at the head of his table than that of his most estimable and portly aunt.

"Is it true, Geoffrey," asked that lady the day after the sale, "that Mrs. Melverton's effects were sold by auction yesterday?"

"I believe there was something of the kind at the Cottage, aunt," was the reply, as Lord Dunmore assisted himself to some kidneys on the breakfast-table; "but who told you?"

"My maid," said Miss Garthorne, stirring her coffee; "what could be the reason? I should have thought after the liberal way in which your father provided for Mrs. Melverton at his death they might have cleared clear of pecuniary difficulties, but some people are so improvident; and if the girl had been the daughter of a peer she could not have received a better education, which I suppose accounts for the trouble in which her foolish mother now finds herself."

"How did you know anything of Miss Melverton's accomplishments, aunt?" asked her nephew. "I suppose from the same source most ladies gain county gossip, the maid again?"

"Not at all," and the Honourable Miss Garthorne shook the earrings in her stupendous ears with an offended toss of her head, "not at all. The girl was here herself a few days ago, asking me if I could assist her in any way to obtain a situation as daily governess in the neighbourhood."

"And what reply did the girl receive?" said his lordship sarcastically, as he pushed his plate from him.

"That I did not keep a scholastic agency, and could in no way help her."

"Concise, aunt, though not a very kind reply," returned Geoffrey, "then I conclude she told you all she was able to teach?"

"She did, and I advised her to take a place as resident governess, but she said she could

not leave her mother. But now I think of it, Lady Dereche is in need of such a young person. I will send Barton with a note; it may be a charity, as you say they are in trouble," and Miss Garthorne looked towards her nephew for appreciation of her Christian-like feeling.

"Give me the note, aunt," said the latter. "I am going to ride this morning, and may as well go to Harbottle as anywhere else."

It was but a short time after that Geoffrey was in the saddle, and the silky coat of his horse glistened in the fine sun as he cantered on in the soft morning air.

"Suspicious looking individual that," thought his lordship, as drawing rein at the gate which divided the lawn of the Cottage from the road, it was opened by a stranger man that he might pass through.

Addie and her mother were busily engaged re-arranging the restored home, and never did Geoffrey think had he seen the former look lovelier than with the short-sleeved dress, which displayed her snowy arms, and her hair fastened but with a single pin, to keep it from her face, drawing in a shower of burnished gold down her back, as she replaced the pictures and treasured ornaments which had been only the day previous consigned to the hammer.

"Lord Dunmore!" she said, as she extended a little pink hand. "I am so glad you are come, for mother and myself could not have expressed on paper our gratitude for your beneficent kindness of yesterday."

"I did not call for thanks, Addie," he returned, with a look of tenderness in his eyes, "though I am happy to know it will do you good; but I was anxious to know how you and your mother were this morning. By-the-by, you have not heard of anything unpleasant having happened in the neighbourhood, have you? for if I did not just now see a detective by your gate, as I passed through, I never saw one in my life."

"Oh! mother, what have you done?" cried Addie, as the blabster figure Mrs. Melverton was dusting fell in fragments on the carpet, and as she stooped to pick up the scattered pieces, Geoffrey noted the hot colour as it rushed to her temples.

"Was it so very valuable?" he asked, forgetting the detective.

"No," answered the girl, "but it was my brother's gift from his first salary."

"Yes, my boy's present," replied the mother, and the tears stood in her eyes, as she carefully collected the particles.

"I am so sorry!"

"Never mind, mother," said Geoffrey, "your son will have plenty of opportunity to replace it with others," but with Mrs. Melverton a superstitious horror seemed to have overcome her, as, unable to restrain her grief, she left the room.

For some time Lord Dunmore still sat by the window where she had left him watching the graceful form of Addie, as she continued her work, in a silent sorrowful way, to unlike her usual manner.

"I think you might leave replacing that rubbish, and come and talk to me, Addie," he said at last; "I have a message for you from my aunt."

"I don't think I shall," retorted the girl. "Our household gods rubbish, indeed! I have no doubts they would be deemed that at Linden Court, but remember, Lord Dunmore, they are quite good enough for Harbottle Cottage."

"No, don't be cross, Addie, dear," said Geoffrey, as rising, he advanced to where the girl stood; "but I want you to sit down and speak to me, I won't keep you long." And passing his arm round her waist, he led her to a chair near his own. "You know I would not offend you for the world, the only household treasure on which I have set my heart; and I came to ask you this morning if you will give yourself to me, Addie, and let me thus place in Linden Court the chief ornament which it now lacks. You know, darling, there are many girls who, without conceit, would be

glad to be Lady Dunmore, but there is no one I would place in that position but yourself, for I love you as a man loves but once in a lifetime. Tell me, Addie, will you be mine? My aunt commissioned me to bring you the offer of a situation as daily governess to Lady De Roche's children. I bring you instead the offer of my heart and home. Tell me darling, you will choose the latter?" He paused for a reply, watching the hot blood as it rose one moment, and then vanished, leaving her pale as marble as the words she would fain have uttered died on her lips.

"It cannot be! it cannot be!" she said at last, as he pressed her for an answer. "No, no! I must take the situation as governess."

"Do you not love me then, Addie?" he asked.

"Love you! As we love life, Lord Dunmore, I love you so that no other man ever took place in my heart. I love you too much to be your wife."

"What do you mean, Addie?" he asked, as he drew her head on his bosom, and stroked her golden hair, whilst she let it rest there, as though unable to tear herself away from her transient happiness, thinking how those caresses would still be remembered when sorrow bore heaviest on her, how the impress of his fond kisses on her lips would still remain in her memory, when she took up the cross she had to bear; then lifting her blue eyes to his, speaking the love her lips refused to utter.

"You would never be forgiven, darling," she said, "for wedding the daughter of your father's housekeeper."

"I am my own master, and can choose my own wife, so let not that separate us. You are of gentle birth, and my equal, an ornament to adorn the home now waiting for you, and one I would treasure to my life's end. Addie, I say it shall be!"

She lay for some moments in the loving arms which enwrapped her in their close embrace, whilst a conflict of feelings rushed through her brain, the resolution to tear herself from him conquered by the great love which made the temptation too strong to resist.

"And you will take me as I am, Geoffrey?" she said at last. "You will love me and still trust me, if even in the future circumstances should arise which should shake your faith?"

"What do you mean, Addie?" he asked.

"There is one secret which must be mine—mine only to the end. It is not wholly in my keeping, therefore I cannot disclose it; but if it should come out, as it may do, will you love me still? It is no guilty secret in my own life. I never loved but you; you and you only, Geoffrey, have taught me what love is. Do you believe me?"

He was silent for some seconds, looking down into the pure innocent face he had pictured in his dreams, the face that had become so dear to him.

"Addie! my own! my darling!" he said, "I will trust you, and whatever this secret is, its shadow shall never darken our lives."

And when Mrs. Melverton again entered the room, Lord Dunmore told her how that Addie had promised to become his wife, and her consent was all now he had to ask.

"But have you considered, my lord?" asked the former. "I was but housekeeper to your father; is my child fit companion for his son?"

Mrs. Melverton was long in being convinced it was for the happiness of both that she had to sanction the alliance.

She knew the pride of the Dunmores, and as she told her daughter, when the latter referred to her own father having been an officer (and a gentleman, "It is not what we were, my child; it is what we are."

And so Lord Geoffrey left Harbottle Cottage the affianced husband of Addie Melverton.

The reins hung loose over the neck of Brutus, as, deep in thought, his master allowed him to walk leisurely over the dusty road.

The green corn, tinged with gold, waved to

and fro in the summer breeze, whilst birds carolled their happiness in the branches overhead.

But Geoffrey saw, heard nothing, his whole mind engrossed in recalling the scene in Harbottle Cottage.

What could this secret be which had threatened to overthrow the bliss of two young lives? That Addie was innocent of any sin he felt convinced, or she would have hidden from him the existence of this bugbear; and the love he felt for her was so great, that had any whisper reached him that she was not worthy of that love, he would not have believed it.

His aunt was reclining on the sofa in the drawing-room as he entered, fanning her pretty form, the heat, as she declared, being enough to kill her.

"Did Mason tell you that someone belonging to the police has been here to see you, Geoffrey?" she asked.

"No, aunt," he replied. "The police? What could they want with me?"

"I don't know," returned his aunt, as she made a dash at a fly which for the last half-hour had been endeavouring to light on her nose; "but you had better ring and hear."

"Tell Mason I want to see him," he said, as a footman answered the bell, and a few moments later a well-fed, fat butler made his appearance.

"It was a gentleman from Scotland-yard as desired to see your lordship," he replied, in answer to Geoffrey, "and he said he would return in the evening, my lord."

"He did not state his business?"

"No, my lord," returned Mason, "he almost, I may say, blunderingly refused to give any information whatsoever."

"That will do, Mason," replied his lordship. "When this man comes let him be shown into the library."

"Did you go to the Cottage, Geoffrey?" asked his aunt, as the butler left the room.

"Yes," replied Lord Dunmore, "but Miss Melverton will no longer require a situation."

"No?" queried the lady, as she again attacked the pertinacious fly.

"No," repeated her nephew. "She has consented to become my wife."

"Your wife!" screamed the Hon. Miss Garthorne. "Good heavens, Geoffrey, are you mad?" and in her excitement she forgot her insect antagonist, the heat at which she continually grumbled, the detective's visit, all but the peril which stood her in the face, which meant banishment from Linden Court, as her fan dropped to the floor, and she went into a fit of violent hysterics.

CHAPTER III.

THE BARK-NOTE.

To ring the bell for Barton, his aunt's maid, was Geoffrey's first thought, and when he consigned her to the care of the same, and the effects of the usual restoratives, he adjourned to the library to think over the events of the morning before it was time to dress for dinner. Vainly he endeavoured to shake from him an apprehension of evil, which would ever present itself to his mind, in connection with the communication Addie had made to him that day, and which seemed to throw a shadow over the happiness he felt in her love; and although he never for a moment doubted her truth, still the shadow of this secret would at times veil the spotless purity of the being whom—he would have given half his life to know—had not a thought which she would have hidden from him.

His was no boyish love; he had outgrown all that. He had like other youths, in years gone by, fancied himself dying of love for a woman old enough to have been his mother, until her charms had faded in his eyes before a fresh divinity, whose complexion—as false as her words—held his heart but for a short space; till like a butterfly flying from flower to flower he at last grew weary of the

chase—never until he saw Addie knowing what true love really meant, and that she was worthy of his love he could not doubt, no, not if he were told that she was false—he would not believe it, not until he had heard with his own ears, or seen with his own eyes the proof of her perfidy.

His aunt had recovered by the time dinner was served, and during the meal, owing to the presence of servants, the cause of the same was not alluded to; and scarcely had the dessert been placed on the table, and they were about to retire, when a loud knock on the hall door resounded through the house.

"Mr. Mathew Hart, Detective Department, Scotland-yard," was on the card, which Geoffrey took from the silver salver which the servant handed him; and to his inquiries receiving the reply that the man had been shown into the library, begging Miss Garthorne to excuse him, he wended his steps thither.

Mr. Hart rose as his lordship entered. He was a large man, with large red hands, and extremely large feet, for which his boots appeared larger still; his face was clean shaven, so as to allow of any disguise he thought proper to assume. He wore a loose coat of a sea-side cut, with trousers and vest to match, and a wide-awake hat, which he had removed from his head, in addition to a heavy-topped walking-stick completed his attire, with the exception of a massive gold Albert chain, which was attached to his watch, and a deep gold ring with a big white stone, which he wore on the smallest red finger of his large red hand.

"Be seated, Mr. Hart," said Lord Dunmore, as, motioning to a chair, he occupied one himself by the table. "I believe you wish to see me?"

"Yes, my lord," replied the detective, "Having been sent down here from London, on the track of a young fellow who has absconded from the firm in which he was employed, leaving defalcations to a good amount. I sighted my bird last night, with the result that I lost him just as I hoped to have clapped my hand upon him," and Mr. Hart brought down the same on his knee as viciously as though it was the escaped criminal.

"But I don't see how this can affect me, Mr. Hart," said Geoffrey, "or what I can do in the matter."

"Pardon me, my lord," replied Mr. Hart, in a professional and far-seeing tone. "We traced him to 'The White Swan,' where he again got the start of us by an hour or two, after having cashed a bank-note for one hundred pounds with the landlord."

"I am surprised the landlord should cash a note for so large a sum for a stranger," returned Lord Dunmore.

"That's just what surprised me, my lord. But it passed off when told me he shouldn't have done so, but the note bore your signature, and he knew your handwriting well; and here it is, my lord," and he drew from his pocket a bank-note, which he handed to his companion, adding, "I should feel obliged if your lordship could remember when and to whom you paid the same, so that we may be able to sift the matter further, as it strikes me he must have accomplices in these parts."

"What makes you think so?" asked Geoffrey, scarcely knowing what he said, as he glanced at the number of the note—the same one he had given to Addie on the previous evening.

"Because me and my pal tracks him last night to a place about five miles from here they call Harebell Cottage, when he gave us the slip."

Then the pal was the man Geoffrey had seen when that morning he visited Addie and her mother.

"What is the name of this man?" he asked.

"George Hale is the name given by the firm, though he may have a dozen aliases for all we know at present," said Mr. Hart, as he

did not fail to note the change which came over Geoffrey's face, as he placed the bank-note in his hand.

"Well, I am sorry I cannot help you, Mr. Hart," said the latter, as he returned him the same. "That note has been endorsed by me, and is genuine, but how it came into the possession of your man I cannot tell, so I must wish you good evening. My servants shall have orders to serve you refreshment in the housekeeper's room, and I hope you will not be long before you capture Mr. Hale;" and he rang the bell, which was soon answered by a servant, who escorted the detective according to his master's orders.

And Geoffrey sat where the other had left him, his head resting on his hands; he heard the policeman's measured tread on the stone corridor as he descended to the lower apartments, and, as in a dream, he again heard him telling him of the cashed note and the defaulter's escape.

"Was this," he asked himself, "the secret which Addie so carefully guarded? And what was this man, George Hale, that she should pay into his hands the one hundred pounds he had intended for the benefit of herself and her mother?"

The theory that the same had been stolen he threw aside, as had such been the case would she not have told him of her loss when he saw them in the morning?—whilst the fact that their home had been put up to auction confirmed his suspicions that the money was needed in some way to silence this man.

Miss Garthorne was naturally anxious to know the purport of the detective's visit, which her nephew studiously avoided disclosing to her, further than to quiet her curiosity by saying he was in the neighbourhood on the track of a young fellow supposed to be hiding in the district, and to ascertain if Lord Dunmore had seen any one of the description given who might be in league with some of the servants at Linden Court, accounted for his visit, and the Hon. Miss Garthorne was satisfied.

She was not in the best of humours with her nephew, whom she considered was about to bring disgrace on the family name by marrying a girl so far beneath him in social position, and thus obliging her to find another home, as of course she would be no longer wanted at Linden Court, although such an idea was far from the intention of Geoffrey, who would never close his doors to his aunt so long as she did not bring unhappiness into his household, relying upon Addie's gentle temper to exercise its influence on the old lady, who might in her way add to the girl's happiness.

"Addie," said her mother, after Lord Dunmore had left them on the day he had proposed for the hand of the former, "don't you think it would be better to tell all, and trust to his generosity, my child? He cannot blame us."

"No, mother, I know that," replied the former, "but I could not bear to tell him; besides, I swore to Cuthbert that never should the tale of his guilt pass my lips. No, I would rather give Lord Dunmore back his promise than to ensure my own happiness, thus place his liberty in peril. No, darling mother, we have suffered much for his sake, and rather than betray him I will resign love, position, even Geoffrey himself, worthless as I know the former to be, still he is my brother. Oh! Cuthbert! Cuthbert! that you were worthier of our love!" and burying her face in her hands she gave way to the grief which for so long she had pent up in her bosom.

The sacrifice of their home, the theft of the note, which she knew no other hands but his could have taken, the dishonour which through him had been brought on their name, all this she would have borne without a murmur; but when, as now, her life's happiness was threatened through his misdeeds, she felt embittered against whilst loving him still, more grieving for her mother, whose

whole soul was so enwrapped in him that when the story of his disgrace reached her ears it almost proved her death-blow; and on the morrow, when again Lord Dunmore came to the Cottage, her sad, pale face, with its tale of sorrow, so went to his heart that he could not bring himself to harp again upon a string the very touching of which he knew gave her pain.

That there was a secret she could not disclose might for a moment cause a doubt to arise in his mind; but as he looked into the depths of her dear blue eyes it was dispelled, and pressing her to his bosom he would tell her of the love which would make their lives a day-dream of bliss, as he vowed to cherish her to the end.

The Hon. Miss Garthorne had even become more reconciled to the match now that she knew she was still to remain beneath the roof of Linden Court, where preparations were in progress for the reception of its future mistress, upholsterers receiving large orders to refurnish such rooms as Lord Dunmore considered too shabby for his bride.

Three months had passed since that day when all the goods of Harebell Cottage had been scattered on its soft green lawn, and neither mother nor daughter had heard more of Cuthbert, consoling themselves with the assurance that he had left the country, and trusting, by means of the money he had taken that night on which they saw him last, that he had begun a new and better life in another land; and so the last faint odour of roses had passed with the transient summer, the last golden sheaf gathered from the fields which but a few weeks before had been rich in their yellow waves, as the joyous bells of Riversdale church rang out in the clear air, mingling with the report of the sportsman's gun that bright September morning on which Addie Melverton became the bride of Geoffrey, Lord Dunmore.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CLOUD NO BIGGER THAN A MAN'S HAND.

It was the middle of November when Lord and Lady Dunmore returned to Linden Court, where the Hon. Miss Garthorne had not only given orders, but had seen that everything was in readiness for their reception, she herself meeting them at the door, her hair drawn tighter than ever from her large face, now blue with cold, as she stood on the step, whilst Geoffrey assisted his bride to alight, which she did into the fat arms of his venerable aunt, who almost crushed her in their fold as she welcomed her to her future home.

"But come in quick!" she said. "You must be perished!" as divesting Addie of her outside wraps, which she consigned to her maid, she led the way to the drawing-room, where a cheerful fire threw its ruddy glow over the surroundings, which everywhere denoted wealth and comfort.

The window leading to the conservatory, rich with tropical foliage, was open, from which the perfume of rare exotics entered the room, pervading it with their sweet odour, a coloured lamp of warm red throwing a rosy glow over the deep green leaves, whilst lights shaded with the same were held by chaste statuary within, the trickling of a tiny fountain adding a mystic charm to the whole.

In the room itself the same delicate taste prevailed, the black-and-gold furniture with deep crimson cushions standing on a carpet of deep green and gold fern leaves, round the room itself there being a dado of the same on a black ground; priceless ornaments peeped from within cabinets and covered ornamental tables, whilst works of the old masters adorned the walls.

Throughout the mansion the same faultless taste prevailed, the boudoir especially prepared for his bride a very marvel of taste and elegance. And this was Addie's new home; and as she sank into the cushions of the sofa, which Miss Garthorne had insisted on drawing close to the fire, a sigh escaped her as the

thought of the skeleton which even existed in this paradise recurred to her memory.

"You must be perished, child!" said that lady, as she gazed on the lovely face of her new niece. "How long have you been on your journey? Did you have good weather crossing the Channel?" she rattled on, without waiting for a reply, so anxious was she to make a favourable impression on the wife of her nephew, to whom she was about to give a long description of what Paris was in the time of the Empire; when Geoffrey, seeing the weary look which passed over the countenance of Addie, told his worthy relative that the former, being very tired, she would be glad to retire early.

"I think her perfectly lovely," she said on her return, after having consigned Lady Dunmore to the care of her maid.

"Then you do not consider my having married the daughter of our old housekeeper such a very dreadful thing after all, aunt?" said Geoffrey, as, with his hands behind him, he stood with his back to the fire.

"It is a question I would rather not answer," replied Miss Garthorne. "You have made your choice, and Heaven grant you may never repent it!"

"And do you think I shall? Aunt, anyone would think you did, to hear you talk!" and a shade of annoyance passed over his lordship's countenance.

"No, Geoffrey, I do not say you will, but you know, as well as I do, that you possess a proud and sensitive spirit, and you must be prepared to meet with slights from those in your own class who may consider your marriage rather *infra dig.* How will you bear them?"

"Very easily, aunt," replied Geoffrey. "Those friends of mine who do not consider Addie their equal will never meet with a welcome at Linden Court, for those who would slight a gentle lady, because she has known adversity, are not such as I would wish to be associates of my wife."

But true, as Miss Garthorne had predicted, there were few callers among the fair sex on Lady Dunmore, a fact not unnoticed by the latter herself, although such would have had no effect on Addie, had it not been for the blow thus given to the pride of her husband.

Her beauty only added to make enemies to her of those whose personal charms existed nowhere but in the chance by which their birth had attached a handle to their names, or a coronet on their brows, and so, resting alone on Geoffrey's love, which never failed her, Addie heeded not the insults thus offered her.

She would ride or drive, accompanied by him, to her mother's home, although no persuasion would prevail on Mrs. Melverton to return the visit.

"No, Lord Dunmore," she would say, when pressed by Geoffrey on that point, "you are very good to let Addie come to see me, but though you married her you did not marry her mother, you know."

Lady de Roche and her daughters were among those with whom Lady Dunmore had formed a circle of acquaintances, and the girls were loud in their praises of the young person whom Miss Garthorne had at one time destined to be the preceptor of their young brothers.

The cold, dreary days had set in now in earnest, when speculations and plans as to Christmas festivities was the general topic of conversation.

Lord Dunmore, in furtherance of a custom which had ever been carried out in his father's lifetime, had determined that the ball which had always been given on Christmas Eve should be revived on that day, in this, his first year of wedded life; so Addie sent out invitations, whilst Miss Garthorne, at her desire, made the other arrangements, only those requiring a man's supervision being entrusted to Geoffrey, who, in his turn, passed the same over to the butler, who was to see

that no expense was spared to make the same a success. Mrs. Melverton, pressed by the aunt, at last consented to superintend what she so fully understood, provided she was allowed to withdraw to the quiet of that lady's room when her services were no longer required.

The Court was now plainly visible through the bare trees from the linden grove which skirted the river, looking like some fairy castle, as from each window shone forth a gleam of light on the broad terraces and wide expanse of snow which glimmered and shone until it reached its very entrance door, from which a broad strip of scarlet cloth laid over its virgin whiteness extended to the carriages, as they severally drove up to unburden their lovely freight at the noble portal.

The strains of soft music fell on the ears of the guests as they were ushered through what appeared as a garden of flowers to the reception-room, where Addie, arrayed in a dress of silvery sheen, with scarlet berries nestling in the folds, and fondling in her snowy bosom, awaited her guests.

The Honourable Miss Garthorne was resplendent in black and gold, with a plume of feathers nodding from the braid at the top of her head, in the style of a funeral horse, which fluttered in a ludicrous fashion with every wave of an enormous red fan, which she kept most industriously in action.

Lord Dunmore, in the centre of a group of gentlemen, ever and anon cast a glance of love and pride at his beautiful wife, whilst he could but ill conceal the mirth caused him by his aunt's grotesque appearance.

Sets were being formed for a quadrille, Sir Arthur Leslie, a very old friend of the host, begging the hand of Addie for the same.

He was a middle-aged man, his dark hair slightly tinged with grey—the only inroad which time appeared to have made in the years which had passed over his head.

He had been a soldier, he told Addie, in his younger days, but had left the service new some years; and then he told her of the delightful balls he had attended when in India, assuring her that was it not for the snow without he could almost fancy himself in India then—the scent of tropical plants, the soft trickling of water, with subdued glowing colours of the lamps, giving an air of Eastern splendour he had never seen elsewhere.

"Is it very long since you left the army?" said Addie, as the quadrille being finished, they wandered to the cooler rooms.

"Before you were born, Lady Dunmore," he replied, "I was with the 49th when they were stationed at Madras in 18—, when I came home on sick leave, and shortly after retired, on the death of my father, succeeding to his title and estates."

"Did you know Captain Melverton?" asked Addie. "He was in the same regiment."

"Milverton!" exclaimed Sir Arthur, "I knew him well, poor fellow. He died of fever. Why do you ask?"

"I am his daughter," she replied.

"His daughter!" ejaculated the Baronet, "Lady Dunmore, your father was my dearest friend. He died in my arms, raving to the last of his wife and children, and can I at any time be of service to his daughter, will you promise that she will command my aid."

The hot blood rushed to the cheek of Addie, as thoughts of Cuthbert, and the trouble which she ever dreaded, he might yet cause her flashed across her mind.

"You are very, very kind, Sir Leslie," she answered, "and should I ever want a friend may I look to you?"

"It would be my greatest pleasure to prove to you how true a one I would be," he replied, as the strains of one of Strauss' waltzes falling on their ears they returned to the ball-room.

"Are you tired, Addie?" asked Geoffrey, as he approached to where his wife sat, by the side of Miss Garthorne. "You look so white."

"No, dear, but the heat is rather overpowering. I should like a walk in the con-

servatory, it is cooler there;" and linking her arm through that of her husband, they passed through the drawing-room to the spot where she and Sir Arthur had so lately stood.

"Sit here," Geoffrey said, as leading her to a seat he left to bring some ice and lemonade "I will soon be back."

He had scarcely passed through the window, when Addie became conscious that others besides herself were availing themselves of the cool air, as from the seat she occupied she could distinctly hear footsteps on the terrace without.

The windows were slightly open to allow the escape of the steam from the heat within, and as the voices drew nearer she fancied she distinguished her own name mentioned as two gentlemen in deep converse passed where she sat.

They stopped to light fresh cigars, unheeding the cold, as they appeared to admire the snowy landscape; and hiding low, so as to be unperceived, she strained her ears to catch the purport of their conversation.

"Well, I am sorry for Dunmore," she heard one say, "though she is as fair a piece of womankind as one would like to see. I should not care to have a ——" here the word was inaudible—"for a brother-in-law."

"But how was it you did not prosecute him?" asked the other.

"Oh! the game wasn't worth the candle. I kicked him out, leaving it for some one else to do."

"And don't you think Dunmore knows of it?" asked the first speaker.

"No, or he would never have married the sister," was the reply, "though it is only just that he should know; but I vote for going in now, it is deuced cold."

And Addie heard their retreating footsteps, as Geoffrey appeared with an ice and lemonade.

"Addie, you are as white as a ghost. You have been dancing too much, darling."

And he sat down beside her, caressingly passing his hand over her sunny hair, as with a strong effort she controlled the tears which would feign have welled to her beautiful eyes.

But thankful for that self-control which came to her relief, she summoned up all the courage of which she was capable, none of the guests as they departed in the early morning light dreaming of the canker which was gnawing at the heart, as she bade them adieu, of the beautiful Lady Dunmore.

CHAPTER V.

A STRANGE LETTER.

THE ball was declared a complete success, and the following morning was the chief topic of conversation among those who had been present, and with none more so than Sir Arthur and Lady Leslie, who pronounced Lady Dunmore to be charming, and all the arrangements of the entertainment to have been carried out with the most perfect taste.

"Fancy, my dear, meeting in Lady Dunmore the daughter of our old friend Melverton?" said Sir Arthur.

"But are you sure, Arthur, she was the child of Captain Melverton?" asked her ladyship, as she toyed with the leg of a chicken.

"Of course," replied her husband. "I had it from her own lips. But why do you ask?"

"Because I understand from Mrs. Stenorton—strictly *entre nous*, you know—that Lord Dunmore had made a *mésalliance*, for which one day he would have reason to be sorry," returned the lady; "as there was an ugly story afloat respecting a brother, of which his lordship was in entire ignorance—a tale of embezzlement, in which, up to the present, the culprit has succeeded in evading the law; but he may be caught at any time, when the *dénouement* will be something shocking to any one of such a proud temperament as the former."

"Still, I do not see in what way he could

blame Lady Dunmore because of her brother's crime; besides, it may not be true, Adela. You know people will talk," and Sir Arthur sipped his coffee, which had become almost cold in the interval, whilst his wife continued.

"Oh, it is quite true, Arthur, for the gentleman (a large merchant) in whose office he first commenced his dishonest career spoke of it last night, telling Mr. Stonorton that he merely dismissed him with a caution, since which, it appears, he obtained a situation by false representation, and finding his first attempt so easy again defrauded his employers until discovery being imminent he decamped, leaving defalcations to a large amount behind him."

"Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise, and for the sake of his wife I sincerely trust Lord Dunmore will never know the truth," replied Sir Arthur, as, adjourning to an easy chair by the fire, he commenced his morning perusal of the daily paper, leaving his wife in deep meditation over the future of the designs of Linden Court.

The months moved on, bringing with them no events to disturb the happiness of Addie and her husband, until the former, consoling herself with the hope that Cuthbert was reclaiming the past in one of the colonies, thought of him now only as a mourner would of the dear one sleeping his last long sleep beneath the green grass.

Mrs. Melverton also shared the same feeling, though at times a voice would appear to whisper to her that he still lived, and the mother's heart still hoped on that she might again press her beloved one to her breast.

There were great rejoicings at The Court, as in the ensuing spring as heir was born to the house of Dunmore, for whose advent great preparations had been made under the superintendence of the Hon. Miss Garthorne, who was virtually more mistress than Addie herself over all that appertained to the Dunmore establishment.

It was a lovely morning in June when Lady Dunmore, seated by the open window in her boudoir, through which the air laden with the perfumes of roses entered the room, with her baby on her lap, was thinking of the happy year she had spent since that day twelve months ago. She had witnessed the sale of her mother's home, and then, as her thoughts wandered on to the events which followed, they rested on Cuthbert, and as she gazed on the features of her little son she fancied she traced a likeness in the infant's face to that of her erring brother, and involuntarily the tears welled to her eyes, as she conjectured what that brother's fate might be.

She wore a loose morning wrap of azure blue, over which her golden hair hung in natural exuberance, forming, on the whole, a lovely picture as the door opened, and Miss Garthorne appeared.

"What, nursing baby still?" she said. "You will quite spoil him, besides making Geoffrey jealous, who has made up his mind that you should have a ride with him this beautiful morning. But I quite forgot; here is a letter he gave me for you."

"A letter for me!" ejaculated Addie, whose correspondence was very limited. "Why, whom can it be from?"

"Well, let nurse take this little tyrant," said the older lady, as she handed the infant to the former, who now appeared, "and then you can see. It bears the London postmark," and Miss Garthorne, placing her gold eyeglasses on her nose, twisted and turned it about before placing it in the hands of her niece.

But as Addie's eyes fell on the handwriting the colour left her face, and a feeling of unaccountable fear took possession of her, the traces of which on her countenance she vainly endeavoured to hide, as she knew Miss Garthorne's far-seeing eyes were fixed upon her, and her hand trembled in breaking the seal, as her look appeared to penetrate to her very soul.

"Who is your correspondent, Addie?" she asked, as Lady Dunmore still sat with the

open letter in her hand, whilst a look of agony passed over her features.

"An—old—friend," was the reply, the words coming in short gasps, as, rising, she placed the letter in her bosom, and then went to her room to dress for the morning ride.

The warm, sunny air of the June day could scarce restore her to her usual self, though she felt it a relief to be free from the scrutinising gaze of her husband's aunt, and more grateful still that he in no way alluded to the letter she had received; but, unlike her usual self, she was quiet and distrustful, and thankful when she was once again alone in her boudoir.

It was then that, dismissing her maid, after having divested herself of hat and habit, her pent-up grief gave way, and the tears gushed through her fingers as she pressed her hands over her burning eyes; but the next moment a sudden determination seemed to take possession of her brain, and with a set purpose on her features she drew an escritoire towards her, and wrote,—

"DEAR SIR ARTHUR LESLIE,—I know not how to approach the subject which has determined me to take this step; but, as a ray of hope, your promise that you would, as my friend, should I ever be in need of such, has induced me to appeal to you in this dreadful trouble which has overtaken me, the greater that I cannot name it to Lord Dunmore. I am in pressing need of two hundred pounds until I receive my quarterly allowance. Will you lend me that sum, under the seal of secrecy, and thus ensure the everlasting gratitude of your unhappy,

"ADDIE DUNMORE.

"P.S.—Please address to me—c.o. Mrs. Melverton, Harebell Cottage."

And then she wrote to her mother, explaining all.

"Let these letters be posted at once," she said, as her maid, making her appearance in answer to her summons, entered the room.

A bright flush was perceptible in the face which had been so pale in the morning, as Lady Dunmore descended to the drawing-room, whilst her eyes shone with an unusual brilliancy.

The Hon. Miss Garthorne was dying with curiosity to know respecting the letter which had had such a strange effect on her nephew's wife, but in tiny mites it had long been consigned to the summer's breeze, Addie wishing at the time she could thus have scattered to the winds the growing fear which was now making her hitherto happy life a misery.

Like a monster it had arisen at her feet, mocking and grinning with the agony she was suffering; whilst the dread that Sir Arthur might betray her added to the torture until it became unbearable, until, distrustful even of her own mother, she would not risk his reply passing through her hands, before he had time to answer the first, sending another letter, in which she begged him to meet her in the Linden Grove at dusk, when she would explain all.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LINDEN GROVE.

"Do you know what is the matter with Addie to-day?" Lord Dunmore inquired of his aunt, as they sat over the dessert, the former saying she was going to the nursery, being the first to rise from the table.

"No, I don't," replied Miss Garthorne, raising a luscious strawberry to her mouth, "unless her letter brought unpleasant news."

"What letter?" asked his lordship.

"The one you gave me for her this morning," said his aunt, "which appeared to affect her greatly."

"Did she say whom it was from?" asked the former.

"An old friend, was all the satisfaction she gave me," was the reply. "But she has certainly appeared most strange since, although she has never alluded to the purport of it."

For a time each was silent, Miss Garthorne

eating her strawberries, whilst her nephew remained deep in thought until the growing shadows without warned them of the closing day.

"I shall smoke a cigar on the terrace, you can tell Addie if she would like to join me," he said, as his aunt arose with the intention of adjourning to the drawing-room, but the latter was empty when she entered, and thinking Addie might be still with her baby, she rang the bell.

"Tell Lady Dunmore that his lordship hopes she will come down," she said, as a servant appeared. "She is in the nursery."

The windows were wide open, and Miss Garthorne could smell the scent of her nephew's weed as he walked to and fro on the terrace, but the shadows grew deeper and deeper, and still no Addie, until, growing impatient, the former again summoned the man to whom she had given the message.

"My lady is not in the house, ma'am," he said; "and Barton says she saw her ladyship go towards the Linden Grove about an hour since."

Lord Dunmore, tired of waiting, now entered the room, as the servant closed the door behind him.

"So you wouldn't come, Addie," he was about to say, as he discovered Miss Garthorne to be alone.

"Hasn't she come down yet?" he asked, addressing the latter.

"Lady Dunmore is out," was the reply. "She was seen to go towards the Linden Grove an hour since. I should go after her, Geoffrey, if I were you."

"Strange," though the latter, as he followed his aunt's advice, "that Addie should go alone, when she knew how he always looked for her to join him in his evening stroll, but as he told Miss Garthorne, perhaps she thought he had gone there, it being a favourite walk of the two.

The pale moon had risen in the heavens, and the rustling of the leaves, in their gentle evening whispers, was all the sound which fell on his ears, as his feet trod down the soft grass, in the shaded path leading to the Grove.

Nearer and nearer to where the silvery water rippled onwards he bent his way, until he saw approaching towards him the slight figure of his wife.

A light woollen wrap was thrown around her shoulders to protect her from the falling dew, and even in the dim moonlight her features appeared white, with a fear depicted on her fair face for which he could not account, as she hurriedly looked back, and then hastened towards him.

"You here, Geoffrey?" she asked.

"Yes, Addie; we thought you were lost; but how you tremble, child?" and he was about to draw her arm through his as the sound of hoofs in the distance caused him to turn to see, as they emerged from the Grove, horse and rider cross the bridge which spanned the stream.

"Who is that?" he asked, as he looked down on the ashen face beside him. "If I am not mistaken, whoever it is must have passed from the Grove."

"That is not possible," replied his wife, in a subdued tone; "it must have been from the field beyond; but let us get in, Geoffrey, I am getting so chilly," and she drew her husband away as the form of Sir Arthur Leslie disappeared in the distance.

She was so anxious that they should retrace their footsteps, feeling she was not safe until away from the scene of that evening's assignation, and she clung to her husband, fearing, dreading, that he might suspect and wrongly judge her actions, fearing that even the crispness of the notes which lay in her fair bosom should betray her secret, as she told him she had sought the river's edge to rid her of the headache which the heat of the day had occasioned her.

When they re-entered the house, the Hon. Miss Garthorne was awaiting them in the

drawing-room, now all ablaze with the brilliant light of the chandelier; and whether it was fancy on her part, or the effects of a secret, which hung as a millstone around her neck, she knew not, but Addie thought her manner cold and constrained, lacking, also, the curiosity in her evening's ramble, so unusual to her husband's aunt, who generally wanted to know, as the servants termed it, the ins-and-outs of everything; and after one or two games of chess with Geoffrey, and a song, in which she failed miserably, Addie, pleading fatigue, told the latter she would rather retire, and as he rose to open the door for her she stayed for one moment, when fixing her eyes in a soft, pleading glance on his own she passed from the room.

The handle had scarcely turned and Lord Dunmore returned to the seat he had previously occupied, when Miss Garthorne took the gold eye-glass from the bridge of her nose, and fixed her gaze upon her nephew, as she was accustomed to do when anything particular was on the tapis.

"Now, aunt, what is it?" asked the former, as he knew from previous experience what to expect. "You have something important to discuss, I know."

"I have a very unpleasant duty to perform, Geoffrey," she replied; "but I think it only right that you should be made aware that your wife carries on a correspondence with Sir Arthur Leslie."

"A correspondence with Leslie! What do you mean, aunt?" as for the moment he could scarcely understand the drift of her communication.

"Well, you need not shout," replied Miss Garthorne; "but to-day, Addie—though perhaps I had better not say anything about it."

"You have said so much," returned Lord Dunmore, savagely, "that you shall either satisfy or quell the demon you have arisen in my breast. What is it you are driving at? On what grounds do you link Addie's name with that of Sir Arthur Leslie?"

"That she has written him two letters to-day," and Miss Garthorne heaved a sigh of satisfaction; at having done what she considered was right and proper.

"How do you know?"

The tone now was quiet, as with his head resting on his hand, strange thoughts rushed through the brain of his lordship.

"Barton informed me, having been shown the same by your wife's maid, who was commissioned to see they were posted," Miss Garthorne replied.

"Of course I might have known it was the maid, aunt."

The tone was sarcastic, and not lost upon his worthy relative, who merely shrugged her shoulders, saying she had done her duty, although an unthankful one to perform; and sailed from the room, leaving Geoffrey as a mother might a child to whom she had administered an unpleasant powder.

He heard the door close behind her, as still he sat in the same position, his eyes fixed on vacancy, whilst his mind took in all that appeared so strange in Addie's conduct on that day. Oh, Heaven! could she be false to him? No; such a thought he drove from him as soon as formed. What was it between her and Leslie? Did he know anything in her past history she feared to disclose? And then he remembered the one page she had told him before her marriage that he could not read. Then he recalled her moonlight walk in the Linden Grove, and the strange horseman in the vicinity, until he worked himself into a fever of imagination, pining the room—he could no longer sit—as a caged lion, and the night sleep, as the stillness of death, had crept over the household, before he ascended to his wife's room.

The light had been lowered so as not to rest on her lovely face, innocent as a babe's, the long lashes resting on the snowy cheek, her golden hair, in all its natural beauty, tossed from her fair forehead. *Woods I walked silent*

"I could as soon doubt an angel," said Lord Dunmore, as he gazed on her in her gentle slumber. "Oh! Addie, my darling, my darling!"

Even in her sleep his voice appeared to fall on her ears, as with a deep-drawn breath she unclosed her weary eyes.

"Oh, Geoffrey, it is very late, is it not, dear?" she asked. "I must have been asleep."

"Perhaps so, Addie," he replied, and then he turned from the bed, scarcely daring to trust himself to speak, as conflicting passions strove for mastery in his bosom, gnawing at the very vitals of his heart.

CHAPTER VII.

AN UNHAPPY MEETING.

How wearily the long night hours dragged on, as Lord Dunmore vainly endeavoured to close his eyes, to forget in sleep the agony of his waking thoughts; and when he descended to the breakfast room, unrefreshed and sick at heart, as his aunt declared ill-tempered with everyone and everything but Addie, who had caused it all.

The latter appeared as usual, no trace on her features or in her actions of the occurrences of the previous day, causing Miss Garthorne to turn up her eyes in disgust at what she considered the levity of her conduct.

Lord Dunmore had previously arranged to join a party of male acquaintances for a day's fishing, and although he had fully intended to have had an explanation with Addie respecting her strange behaviour before starting on his expedition, when an opportunity presented itself he felt unequal to the task.

His aunt could not understand his conduct, putting it down to the supposition that such had been arrived at between them, as entering the room, to which she had adjourned after breakfast, fully equipped for the day's sport, he told her he should not be home to dinner, perhaps not till late in the evening; and then he turned to Addie, who had followed him in, when, drawing her towards him, he kissed her tenderly, and a beseeching look came into his eyes, as he told her to take care of herself till his return, not forgetting to salute his infant son, whom nurse had just placed in her ladyship's arms.

"Mind you are good, young man," he said, smiling, as with one more adieu he was gone, and Addie with her baby watched at the window until the dog-cart had vanished in the distance.

"I can't think what is the matter with Geoffrey this morning," said Miss Garthorne, hoping to draw Addie out. "He appears quite upset about something," and she fixed her eyes on Addie as though expecting to see a change on her countenance. "I do not think he was well pleased last night to find you alone in the Grove."

"No!" said the latter, the colour now tinging her cheeks. "He did not tell me so."

"It would have been better that he had," replied the other, "than that Lady Dunmore's conduct should be the gossip of the servants' hall."

Addie turned, this unexpected assault for the moment almost depriving her of the power of speech, her cheeks now ablaze, as she scornfully replied,—

"Lord Dunmore does not require his servants, nor would he allow them to be judges of his wife's actions, which he alone has the right to question."

"I did not mean to offend you, Addie," replied the elder lady, fearing she had gone too far, "but, unfortunately, maids will talk."

"Possibly; but ladies are not compelled to listen. However, as you have commenced the subject, will you tell me in what way I have incurred the righteous indignation of my waiting-woman?" and ringing the bell, in answer to which the nurse appeared, Addie consigned the future lord of Dunmore to her

keeping, and then returned to her seat by the window, to await the explanation of Miss Garthorne.

"I am sorry now I spoke at all," commented that lady, "but as you insist I will tell you."

And then she related how she was made aware of her correspondence with Sir Arthur Leslie, and the construction put on her strange behaviour of the previous evening.

"And you told Geoffrey of this?" she demanded, with blazing eyes.

"I thought it my duty to do so, Lady Dunmore," Miss Garthorne replied.

"And he thought me the guilty thing your story insinuated! Oh! Geoffrey, my love! my love!" and, burying her face in her hands, Addie sobbed out the grief she could not restrain. "No! don't come near me! Leave me!" she cried, as Miss Garthorne made an attempt to soothe her. "You have made me vile in his eyes, you have endeavoured to shake the faith he had in my honour, you have striven to lessen his love for me, and why! Oh, Heaven! why!"

As she spoke, her gaze wandered over the wide expanse of velvet sward, with the warm sun casting its shadows over the same, the gentle swaying of the trees, with a quiet murmur as they bent their branches to the soft earth, so in variance to the wild tumultuous feelings raging in her own bosom, like a mighty torrent tossing her hither and thither.

What could she say to this woman? How could she answer the imputations she had cast upon the integrity of her actions? And, worse than all, how could she refute the charges brought against her, and most of all to her husband? And as she thought that his faith shaken, his love would lessen, passed through her mind, the tears gushed from her eyes, as, with choking sobs, she passed from the room.

To be alone with her sorrow, alone with her aching heart, was all Addie asked, as she sauntered to her favourite seat beneath a spreading oak, where, shaded from the noon-day sun, she could think, dream of the past, and speculate as to the future, whilst she blamed herself that she should have been so thoughtless as to have allowed those letters to pass through any hands but hers, and to-night it would have been all over, her secret in her own keeping!

But as her thoughts again reverted to Geoffrey, a firm resolution appeared to take possession of her. Yes, she would see him first, before he had had time to see his aunt again, when she would confess all, and trust to his generosity; his anger she feared not so much as his distrust.

This last resolve appeared to give her consolation, as, in a dreamy state, she still sat as in her sleep, hearing the hum of insects and the songs of birds as they carolled above her head.

All traces of her emotion had vanished when, after a while, she joined Miss Garthorne at lunch, although she maintained a guarded reticence as that lady endeavoured to engage her in conversation.

"I shall not be home to dinner," she said; "I am going to Harebell, but shall return early. Let the carriage be sent for me at nine o'clock. Should Lord Dunmore be home before, he need not be uneasy."

But Geoffrey had not had a pleasant excursion. The shady morning had terminated in a hot sunny day, and the sport was bad.

"The fish will never bite, old fellow, if you keep dashing your line in as though you were beating for partridges," said his friends, whose chances of a capture were thrown away by his impatience.

"You seem out of sorts to-day, Dunmore; anything amiss?" asked another.

"I am not very well," he replied, "and do not feel up to it," and, drawing in his fishing-tackle, he told them he would not spoil their fun, but would watch as they brought the fish to the surface.

And, as later on the sky became clouded, they had made a good haul, when the boats

were drawn to the river's edge, and they landed, where traps were in waiting to convey them to Brickley Hall, the residence of Sir Joseph Ashton, who played the rôle of host.

"You'll stay to dinner, of course? What nonsense!" said the latter, as Geoffrey, pleading illness, begged to be excused. "You will be better after a rest, old man."

"Indeed, I must decline," he replied; "I have been scarcely able to hold my head up all day; so you really must allow me to say good evening."

"It is too bad! But I suppose it can't be helped," Sir Joseph answered, as, shaking hands, Lord Dunmore seated himself in his dog-cart, and, bidding his friends adieu, turned his horse's head homeward.

Miss Garthorne was alone in the drawing-room as he entered, on his arrival at Linden Court.

"Home already, Geoffrey!" she exclaimed, "I did not expect you till late."

"No! But I was not very well, so preferred dining at home. Where is Addie?" he asked.

"Gone to Mrs. Melverton's," was the reply. "The carriage is ordered to fetch her at nine o'clock."

"I will go for her myself," he answered, taking his watch from his pocket; "it is now half-past six; give orders to have dinner ready as soon as possible. I will dress at once. You need not counterorder the carriage," as rising from the table where his aunt was still enjoying her dessert he said he should walk over to Harebell.

The church clock had just struck eight as Lord Dunmore crossed the last field, which led to the cottage. The gnats flew before, dancing in their delight at the prospect of the fine weather they denoted; the birds overhead were chanting their evening hymns to their mates as they nestled in the branches. The soft quietude of the hour was in unison with his thoughts; and he rested on the gate leading to Mrs. Melverton's, to enjoy the reigning stillness around, when two figures, as they passed close to where he stood, shaded from view by the shrubbery which divided the Cottage grounds from the main road, attracted his attention; and moving to where a gap in the hedge disclosed them distinctly, he saw Addie in deep conversation with a stranger.

He could see the face of the latter, as it was bent towards that of his wife. It was a handsome face, and a dark moustache covered the upper lip; his eyes, which were raised for a moment, were a dark hazel, but bearing an expression of recklessness, which told the character of their owner.

"Are you not coming up to the Cottage?" he heard Addie ask, as her companion looked down, evidently at the shabbiness of his attire, when he answered,—

"Not like this, Addie; never again until I can enter the same an honest man."

"An honest man!" Lady Dunmore replied, "and when will that be? Oh! if you had known what it has cost me to get you this, I think even you would strive to lead a better life. It is the last I can do for you, Cuthbert; from this day seek not to see me."

"Then you do not love me, Addie?" he asked.

"Love you! how can you ask such a question? Have I not risked home, detection, everything, for your sake; and then you ask me if I love you?" and Lord Dunmore could faintly see the beautiful eyes raised to those of the stranger, as the latter placed his arm around the form of his wife; then, taking something from her bosom, she gave it into the hands of the other, as she continued: "Take them, Cuthbert, it is one more chance; for my sake do not waste it." And as he placed the packet in his breast he stooped as though to impress a kiss on the lips of the girl, when a blow struck him to the earth, and Lord Dunmore stood before them.

"Geoffrey! Oh, heavens! what have you done?" cried Addie; as falling on her knees beside the prostrate man she looked on the

features, white as those of death; whilst the former, his arms folded across his breast, and eyes blazing with the fire of jealousy, regarded the scene before him.

"Yes; what have I done, madam?" he repeated. "I have been witness of what you thought, taking advantage of my absence, would never come to my knowledge. I have seen that which from others I would never have believed; I have proved you unworthy of the name you bear; I—"

"Hush, hush! Geoffrey," she replied, as she still knelt by the side of the fallen man, who yet showed no signs of returning consciousness; "you do not know what it is you say."

"Tell me, then, who is this man, to whom you grant clandestine meetings, for whom you avow a love which should be mine alone."

But for the moment Addie heard not what he said, as bending to catch the faint sound which escaped from the other's lips she called him by name.

"Who is this man?" again asked Lord Dunmore, as he regarded the strange scene before him; and as Addie still remained silent, her whole thought centred on the prostrate form, the latter made a sign that Geoffrey should approach.

"I think you have about done for me," he said, as in attempting to rise the blood flowed from a wound at the back of his head, where the same had come in contact with a sharp stone; "not that my life is worth much, but she loved me, poor Addie."

"Who are you, then?" asked Lord Dunmore.

"I am—her—brother," and again a faintness overcoming him he fell back on the ground.

For the second, Lord Dunmore appeared deprived of all power of action, as moving to the side of his wife he alone endeavoured to appease her grief, as her tears fell on the white face of Cuthbert.

"Go to the Cottage and tell mother to send help," but as the sound of wheels were heard approaching, another thought entered her mind, and she asked him to stop the carriage which was approaching to convey her home before it preceeded up the drive.

"She must not know yet. May I take him home with us, Geoffrey?" she asked, as once more he showed signs of returning life; and she tied her handkerchief around his head, whilst the former, assisting him to rise, did as she had asked him.

A few minutes later, and Addie, having bid good-bye to Mrs. Melverton, returned to where Cuthbert, with Lord Dunmore, were seated in the carriage awaiting her.

CHAPTER VIII.

EXPLANATIONS.

Of course Miss Garthorne was very curious as well as surprised, when the carriage returned with her nephew, his wife, and a stranger, who, leaning on the arm of the former, with a handkerchief bound round his head, entered the house, when he was led to the drawing-room and laid on a sofa, whilst a servant was despatched for a doctor.

"What is the matter?" she asked of Addie, who stood by the side of the injured man, but further than that it was her brother who had met with an accident she gave her no satisfaction, whilst Lord Dunmore almost rudely pushed her aside.

"You had better retire, I think," he said, "as the doctor will soon be here;" and as she still stayed he moved and opened the door, an action she could not misconstrue, as tossing her head she passed through the same.

The wound did not turn out so serious as Geoffrey at first apprehended, and further than weakness from loss of blood the doctor declared there was nothing to fear, but it was not until his strength was so far restored as to enable him to converse without effort that Lord Dunmore approached the subject of his secret meeting with Addie.

"You might have got me into a dence of a scrape," he said, one day soon after, as he sat smoking a cigar, whilst Cuthbert reclined on the couch by the library window. "Just suppose I had killed you, which at that moment I might have done, a nice mess I should have been in!"

"It would not have mattered much, my life is a worthless one," replied the other.

"The better reason why a good man should not hang for it," replied Lord Dunmore, smiling; "but look here, Cuthbert, why did you not let me know at first that you were Addie's brother?"

"Has not she told you, then?" asked Cuthbert. "Oh! Lord Dunmore, I fear when you know all you will turn your back on me."

"She has told me nothing," replied the latter, "nor do I wish you to tell me anything which you would rather I did not know, as I assure you, for the sake of your mother, I have no wish but to be your friend."

"Yes, my poor mother," he answered; "you are very good, Lord Dunmore; and does she know where I am?"

"Yes," replied his lordship, "I saw her yesterday and told her that you had met with an accident when on your way to see her, and that you were for the present under my roof."

"And what did she say?" he asked.

"Now that is just the point I am coming to," replied his lordship, as, throwing away his cigar, he advanced to where the young man was reclining. "She asked me with a white, scared expression on her face, if I knew who I was harbouring, and was about to begin a long story, when I told her if there was anything I ought to know I would hear it from no other lips than yours. Remember, Cuthbert, I am your friend, and as such I ask you to tell me what there is in your past that I ought to know."

"And I will tell you," he answered, "but don't ring for lights, my lord. I feel I could disclose to you my life's history better in the soft twilight."

"You were, as you know, away from Riversdale the few last years that my mother remained here as housekeeper, and that when she removed to the Cottage left her by your father's will you saw very little of her home life, never coming across me during the few months I was at home previous to my going to London, to fill the situation which, through the late lord's influence, had been obtained for me, previous to his death, as cashier to the firm of Laurie and Sons, large merchants in the City. For a time all went on well, and my employers placed implicit faith in me, until, unfortunately, having much spare time on my hands and no friends, I fell in with a fast set, and soon found myself spending not only more money than I earned, but ruining my health also by the life of dissipation into which I was led. From bad I went to worse, until I found myself responsible for a debt of honour I was unable to pay. It was the old story. I appropriated moneys belonging to the firm, intending to repay the same when luck turned in my favour, which I might have done had it not been that a fellow, who was jealous of the position I had obtained from the first, through his being much older than myself, and having been some time in the office, having his suspicions aroused, watched me closely, and finally laid a trap into which I fell, and by which all became known to the manager, who acting on the authority of the firm, on account of your late father's interest, merely dismissed me with a caution."

"And I suppose the other fellow walked into your shoes," said Lord Dunmore.

"I don't know, but very likely," replied Cuthbert, "but that was not the worst. I soon obtained another berth, and entered it with a firm resolve to resist every temptation, and show my gratitude for my lucky escape, by determining to act honestly in the future, and I really believe I should have done so had not

a temptation, greater than I had ever known, presented itself to break my resolution.

"I became deeply enamoured of a young girl, to whom I had been introduced at a friend's house; but her father, a retired tradesman, who had accumulated great wealth, scornfully refused the offer I made for his daughter's hand, asking me, with a sneer, how I thought to marry on such a pittance as I was then in receipt of.

"I asked him if that was his only objection? He said, 'Yes, as a man he rather liked me, but his daughter's husband must be able to support her in the style to which she had been accustomed.'

"I did not tell him that she had not always known such luxuries as she now possessed; but left him, after a loving farewell to Agatha, who reiterating her vows that she would never marry any one else, and I vowing within myself to obtain that which would make her mine.

"I had read of large fortunes made on the Stock Exchange in a day; and as immense sums passed through my hands in the way of business, a sudden temptation took possession of me. An idea flashed across my brain, and I gained an introduction to a broker; but my speculations failed, until I knew exposure was inevitable, and without being a shilling the richer for the moneys I had embezzled—not even daring to pay a last visit to Agatha, I fled, too well knowing that the police would be on my track before I had time to escape. I had written to my mother, who told me she would refund the money if I could only prevent its being found out for a few days. Poor mother! But the day she was to have sold all she had for my benefit I decamped, not daring even to tell her the extent of my defalcations."

"And did they put the police on your track?" asked Lord Dunmore, as he remembered the incident of Mr. Hart's visit.

"Yes," replied Cuthbert; "but I eluded their grasp. I had hidden that very night in a cupboard, in my mother's room, when knowing escape to be impossible, and that my place of concealment would be easily discovered, I emerged from the same, as the latter, with Addie, were talking to the detectives in the hall; when, passing by the table, an unclosed letter, attracted my attention. I don't know what induced me, in my hurry, to look at it, but I did; it was a note for one hundred pounds, and with-out further thought, I took it and fled."

"My note!" exclaimed Lord Dunmore as vainly endeavouring to conceal the horror depicted on his countenance, at the discovery he had made of the thief in the person of his wife's brother; he paced the room, as the door opened, and Addie entered.

"Cuthbert," he said, as he approached to where the young man still lay; "I find it hard to forgive you, and until you are well I will not ask you to leave my roof; but when that time arrives I cannot offer you my hospitality further, until, may be, years to come, you can return when this stain upon your honour has been wiped out."

"Do you know all Geoffrey?" asked Addie, as she clung to her husband's arm.

"No, Addie," said Cuthbert, "not all that you have risked for my sake. Tell him, sister dear, that when I go from hence, I may know that between you, now, no secret will exist, and I swear before Heaven never again to cross your path, until, as he says, I can do so with an unblemished name."

And in the gloaming Addie told her husband the rest of the request she had made to Sir Arthur Leslie, the meeting in the Linden Grove, and for what end she had borrowed the money, to save Cuthbert from further crime.

It was some time, when she ceased speaking, before Lord Dunmore made any reply; his mind for a moment soared 'twixt pride for the name he bore, and love for the wife he loved, even now to a greater degree, when he became aware of the self-sacrifice of which she was capable.

"Can you forgive me, Geoffrey?" she at last asked, as she felt his breast, on which her head rested, with the emotion passing within; when drawing her closer to him, and passing his hand over her hair,—

"Forgive you, darling!" he said; "my own darling wife, even as I hope to be forgiven."

AFTER YEARS.

TEN years have passed since that day on which Cuthbert Melverton left Riversdale. Lord Dunmore, determining no stone should be left unturned to enable him to retrieve the past, procured for him a passage to Australia, with a letter of recommendation to one of the leading firms in Sydney; and although Sir Arthur Leslie never knew the true history, still he was told sufficient to make him aware that it was to assist a wild brother that Addie had asked him to advance money without Lord Dunmore's knowledge.

Mrs. Melverton has long left Harebell Cottage, at the request of her son, joining him in the home he had made for her in the fair colony; whilst the Honorable Miss Garthorne, who trembled on her throne at Linden Court for a short time, is now fully reinstated in her former estate; her chief happiness being in the society of her little grandnephews and nieces, who think there is no one in the world like Auntie.

And Lord Dunmore has no reason to regret the clemency he showed to his brother-in-law, as in reading his last letter in which he tells him of the bright new life opened to him, his darling wife—his greatest treasure—and the little son given him to add to his happiness, all of which he considers he owes to him and the dear sister who suffered so much for his sake.

[THE END.]

WOMEN IN NAVAL BATTLE.

IN the gallant and sanguinary action there was a seaman named Phelan, who had his wife on board. She was stationed—as is usual when women are on board in time of battle—to assist the surgeon in the care of the wounded. From the very close manner in which the *Swallow* engaged the enemy, yard-arm and yardarm, the wounded, as may be expected, were brought below very fast, among the rest a messmate of her husband (consequently her own), who had received a musket ball through the side.

Her exertions were used to console the poor fellow, who was in great agony and nearly breathing his last, when by some chance she heard her husband was wounded on deck.

Her anxiety and already overpowered feelings could not one moment be restrained; she rushed instantly on deck and received the wounded sailor in her arms.

He faintly raised his head to kiss her; she burst into a flood of tears, and told him to take courage; "all would yet be well;" but scarcely had she pronounced the last syllable when an ill-directed shot took her head off.

The poor tar, who was closely wrapped in her arms, opened his eyes once more, for but a moment, and then shut them for ever.

Phelan and his wife were sewed up in one hammock, and, it is needless to say, buried in one grave.

The narrator adds to the pathos of the above story, telling how, only three weeks before, a fine boy had been born to them, and how poor Tommy fared until they put into Port Mahon.

The sailors all agreed "he should have a hundred fathers; but what could be the substitute of a nurse and a mother?"

Happily there was a Maltese goat on board, which proved as tractable and faithful to his charge as the immortal dumb foster-mother of Roman story.

In Rodney's battle with De Guichen off the Pearl Rock, Martinique, April 17, 1780, there was a woman on board the *Sandwich*, Rodney's flagship, who "fought a twenty-four pounder gun, and afterwards attended the whole night upon the wounded men."

HOUSEKEEPING.

AN overworked woman may keep her house in order, but she adds little to the comfort of her home. Good housekeeping is by no means as rare as good homekeeping. It is of far less importance.

A certain amount of drudgery must be gone through with, daily, in any calling; about three-fourths of life is drudgery. One-fourth can be rescued from the toil and toil of the world by management and thought.

The most difficult and the most necessary lesson for a housekeeper to learn is that she must assert her individuality. It is useless to try to please everybody. Many things in our homes are done with "an eye single" to our neighbours.

Work must be pruned down and lopped off until it matches strength, for the latter refuses to be enlarged by any amount of thought. It is a nice point to adjust this balance properly. It requires much giving up and letting go. What shall we give up? Ay, there's the rub. Everything seems important.

Things must be kept clean, there is no doubt about that; but the number of things to be kept clean may be greatly diminished. But each must solve for herself the question of simplifying living. Women's fetters are largely self-made. Carvings, upholstery, brasses, bronzes, that cause frowns, back-aches, irritability, and heart aches, are a poor investment of money and time. Things, more than people, bring women to the verge of despair.

The endless round of imagined duties causes chronic overwork among women, produces the saddest results to them and those dependent upon them for rest and comfort.

"There is nothing in the world I dread," said the Household Philosopher, "like a thoroughly exhausted woman. No amount of personal comfort ever compensates for such a state of affairs." Of course not. What constantly tired woman is capable of generous sympathy and ready help, or of companionship? Can she divide care and double joy?

The better part of life cries out for warmth and tenderness; but the women who should give it are blindly wasting themselves on material things, pushing the outside of the cup without a thought of the wine within.

TANNED FACES.—Why do ladies object to having their faces tanned? The deep, rich crimson colour is certainly very becoming and preferable to the pale, sickly look so common. The reason is not difficult to find. A tanned face is thought to belong to persons low in the social scale; in other words, to be vulgar. So women forego the good they might receive from sunshine, and acquire a complexion of sickly pallor caused by organic decay, and call it beautiful.

MOROCCO LEATHER.—Leather, which is used throughout the civilised world, is the skin of some animal which has undergone a chemical change by the process of tanning. The gelatine of the skin combines with the tannin, a vegetable substance, and the result is leather. Ox-hides give us sole-leather; calfskin, tanned, gives the material for men's boots and shoes; sheepskins give leather for binders, either as skivers or as an imitation of morocco; lamb-skins afford stock for glove-makers. Goats and kids give the best qualities of light leather; the former being the material of the best morocco, while kid leather is taken by glove-makers and ladies' shoemakers. Morocco and kid are the chief articles used for ladies' shoes, and morocco was once used for portières and hangings in rooms. The preparation of most of these leathers involves the same general processes, although the details differ—the skin is first cleansed of all fleshy particles, then it is freed from the hair or wool, and steeped in a tanning solution. The preparation of fine morocco, such as is used in expensive bindings, requires careful manipulation and more expensive ingredients to obtain durability, strength, and beauty.

FACETIE.

A RUTHLESS asserts that the reason why ladies' teeth decay sooner than gentlemen's is because of the friction of the tongue and the sweetness of the lips.

Says a philosopher: "No thoroughly occupied man was ever miserable." Probably this philosopher never spent a forenoon among his friends trying to borrow a five-shilling piece.

AN Irishman telling what he called an excellent story, a gentleman observed that he had read it in a book several years ago. "Confound these ancients!" said the Irishman; "they are always stealing one's good thoughts."

A young scholar, the first day at school, was asked her name by the teacher, and replied. Her father's name was the next question, and she did not know his Christian name. The teacher then asked her, "What does your mother call him?"—"Yes donkey," said the child.

"WELL, my dear, you are getting on nicely with your music?" "Oh, yes, mamma; last month when I played four-handed pieces with my music teacher, I was always a couple of bars behind. Now I am always at least three bars ahead."

A widow has been three times married. Her first husband was Robb, the second Robbins, and the third Robinson. The same door-plate has served for the whole three, and the question now is, what extended name can be procured to fill out the remainder of the space on it.

POSSESSION OR PURSUIT.—At a debating club the question was discussed: Whether there is more happiness in the possession or pursuit of an object?—"Mr. President," said a young orator, "suppose I was courtin' a gal and she was to run away, and I was to run after her, wouldn't I be happier when I cotched her than when I was running after her?" The young man gained the victory.

THE lady of the house was a handsome woman of a mature order of beauty, and when she had completed her toilet she gazed fondly at herself in the glass, and remarked to her new maid, "You'd give a good deal to be as good-looking as I am, Lucy, wouldn't you now?" "Yes'm—almost as much as you would give to be as young as I am."

SCENE.—Bootmaker's shop with legend. "Boots mended while you wait." Credulous party handing in his boots: "Look sharp now, and I'll wait." Bootmaker: "We're so full up of work, you can't have 'em under a couple of days."—Credulous Party: "A couple of days! Why, you old humpbag, you have it stuck up in your window that you mend 'em while people wait!"—Bootmaker: "Just so; and, if you'll wait a couple of days, you'll have 'em!"

HE was not feeling very well that evening, but before he left her he managed to say: "Marie, when I look down into your lambent orbs, refulgent with a more than celestial brightness, I feel myself the very Romeo gazing upon his Juliet, and am completely lost in the realisation of my identity." And she, darling creature, looked up into his face, radiant with heavenly hope, and softly murmured: "Frank, isn't your headache easier now? I should think you'd feel wonderfully relieved after getting all that out of your system."

A LADY who had seen much of the world was asked on one occasion why plain girls often get married sooner than handsome ones; to which she replied that it was owing mainly to the tact of the plain girls, and the vanity and want of tact on the part of men. "How do you make that out?" asked a gentleman. "In this way," answered the lady. "The plain girls flatter the men, and so please their vanity, while the handsome ones wait to be flattered by the men, who haven't the tact to do it."

STUDENT (translating): "And er—then—er—he—er—went—er—" Professor: "Don't laugh, gentleman; to err is human."

PROFESSOR: "If you attempt to squeeze any solid body it will resist pressure." Class smiles, and recites examples of exception which prove the rule.

THE editor, in writing his address, said: "We have come to stay." But the printer set it up "starve," and is now looking for another sit.

"WELL," said Mrs. Spriggins, in response to a remonstrance from her husband, "I got tired sittin' up there all alone in solitaire, so I just went down and percolated through the crowd."

It is said that mice are just as much afraid of women as women are of mice; but as their screaming apparatus is not constructed on the same principle, they are restrained from communicating the intelligence to the people in the adjacent towns.

MISS VILLAGE GREENE: "Oh, ma! look at those vulgar people dipping the fingers in the lemonade bowls!" Mrs. Village Greene: "Hush, child! don't speak so loud. It may mortify them."

THEY had been quarrelling. So you wish there was another war, do you, William?" she observed. "Yes, I do!" he replied. "Well, William, I will try and accommodate you." And she did.

MR. SAMPLESON is a very irascible man, and is in the habit of punishing his boys very severely. Not long since he observed that one of his sons needed a new pair of pants. He scolded the boy for wearing out his clothes so fast. "Pa, no pants can last any time the way you hit," replied the son, reproachfully.

"Yes," remarked a conceited young bachelor, "I have the greatest admiration for the fair sex, but I never expect to marry—oh, dear, no!" "Indeed!" remarked a lady. "Then I am to understand that you not only admire women, but you have a sincere regard for them as well."

"WHAT's that you have in your hand?" asked Mrs. Gimlet of her husband, as he brought home a roll of manuscript. "Brains, madam," replied Mr. Gimlet, pompously. "Are you surprised at that fact?" "Not in the least," she replied. "I knew you didn't carry them in your head."

AN ambitious doctor was complaining about the ingratitude of the public toward his profession. He said, bitterly: "Statesmen, generals, artists and scientific men all get monuments erected to their memory; but who ever heard of a doctor having a monument?" "Why, doctor, don't you count those monuments out in the churchyard? Don't they mean anything?"

"THINK," said a merchant, picking up what appeared to be a marble paper-weight from his desk, "is the only thing I ever stole in my life. I got that at an hotel when I was on my wedding tour, eighteen years ago. That's a cake of hotel soap, and after trying for seven years to wear it out in my bath-room, I have been using it as a paper-weight all these eleven years."

"BROWN is so bunged up with rheumatism," said Smith, "that he can't walk a step. Poor fellow! I felt so sorry for him that I went to his home last night and told him stories for two hours." "You say he can't walk a step?" "Not a step." "Well, didn't he at least try to walk?"

FERRIS.—He was polite, but diffident, and had got entangled in conversation with a couple of young ladies, and was struggling along as best he could. They were discussing the merits of different actresses. "Y—yes," he said, "Mrs. B— is certainly a very clever actress, but I—I think she is one of the plainest women I ever saw. That is," he added politely, under the vague impression that some qualification should be introduced here, "I mean, of course, present company always excepted."

"Yes," replied Brown, "you always find me with a pen in my hand. I am a regular penholder, my boy." "Let's see," said Fogg, musingly, "a penholder is usually a stick, isn't it?"

STUDENT LOVER: "I have called, sir, to ask your permission to pay my addresses to your daughter." Old gent (somewhat deaf): "Pay for her dresses? Why, certainly, my dear sir! Here are the bills." He gave one glance at them and fled.

AN orator, holding forth in favour of "woman—dear, divine woman," concluded: "Oh, my hearers, depend upon it, nothing beats a good wife!" "I beg your pardon," replied one of the audience; "a bad husband does."

A rook was asked the lady of his affections, the other evening, how she liked the look of his new style standing collar. After critically surveying him and the collar, she replied: "Very nice, indeed. It looks like a white-washed fence round a lunatic asylum."

"Do you think you will see Smith down town?" asked Jones of a friend. "Yes." "You are quite sure?" "Oh, I haven't the slightest doubt in the world that I shall meet him somewhere. I owe him £10."

"PAPA," asked a little six-year-old daughter of a physician, "wasn't Job a doctor?" "I never heard that he was; why do you ask?" "Because mamma said the other day that she didn't think you had any of the patience of Job."

A new telephone instrument has been invented by which the crying of a baby may be heard at the distance of a hundred miles. Of all the millions of people in this country there may be a dozen or two who yearn to hear the yells of a baby a hundred miles distant, but we doubt it. A contrivance that would prevent the crying of a baby being heard at a distance of ten feet is what the sleepless parents of this country demand.

KNOW OR.

Familiarity not only breeds contempt, but munny ov the vices. No one ever learned how to lie, and swear, or even chew tobacco, all alone bi himself.

Autobiographies are the most difficult things to write korrektly, for there iz nothing that a man knows less about than himself.

The Bible is a blessed old book, and it iz a valiant one, too; it tackles a saint as readily as it duz a sinner, and there ain't one statement in it, moral or historikal, that any ded infidel haz disproved, or that any living one kan.

When a man gets so low down in this world that nothing but whisky will soothe his troubles, he haz got as low down as he kan git, by land—the only thing left for him iz to go bi water.

I consider all kinds ov pets a nuisance, but the lamb kind the most so.

The only really wise people are the ded ones, and munny ov them, probably, kno more than they wish they did.

I don't want to liv among the heathen, and eat missionaries, but I kant help but admire munny ov their traits—at a distance.

The world is full ov mangy and low-priced dogs, but not one among the number that yo kan hire to betray his master.

A literary woman, if she marrys at all, should marry a coxcomb; she kan despise him as much as she pleases, and he won't know the difference.

The animals hav avarice as fully developed as the humans; dogs bury bones that hav no meat on them, and never dig them up, but go and smell for them okasionally, to see if they are safe.

Don't forget this mi perennial friend, every thing haz 2 sides to it, and a square thing haz 4.

There iz nothing so plain as the krook's in a dogs tail, and nothing more krooked than trying to straighten them.

JOSH BILLINGS.

SOCIETY.

THE EMPRESS EUGENIE has just completed her sixtieth year. The Princess Beatrice sent her Majesty a lovely bouquet of violets, with an affectionate letter, as well as a *caduceus* worked by her own hands. The Queen also despatched a special messenger with some graceful souvenirs to Farnborough on the occasion.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH will succeed Admiral Lord John Hay in the Mediterranean as soon as all complications with Russia have disappeared.

THE KING AND QUEEN OF SAXONY are making a tour among the Italian lakes; the former, after his usual visit to Ems, where he will meet the Emperor William, intends to pass the summer at Silyport, the country seat that was left him by the late Duke of Brunswick, who altogether bequeathed to his Majesty estates and properties of the value of nearly £250,000.

MARRIAGES are announced between Lord Norreys, son of the Earl of Abingdon, with Miss Glynn, daughter of the late Vice-Admiral and Hon. H. Carr Glynn, C.B., and Mr. H. Ellison Achlom, youngest son of the late Captain Achlom, 28th Regiment, with Miss Booth, daughter of the late H. Booth, Esq., and niece of Sir C. Booth, Bart.

THE KING OF ITALY, who is an enthusiastic sportsman, going out frequently alone with two setters for attendants, was a few days ago met by a person who complimented him on his shooting, telling him that if he would come to his farm at daybreak next morning and kill a fox that had been killing his chickens he would not mind giving him three francs. King Humbert kept the appointment, killed the fox, ate breakfast with the farmer and his family, and received his three francs. Two days later they were amazed by the visit of an officer in a grand carriage bringing presents to the family from the King, and were greatly confused on learning that the farmer had employed his Majesty the King of Italy to rid his henroost of a thief.

THE DUCHESS OF TECK (Princess Mary Adelaide), accompanied by the Duke of Teck and their children, Princess Victoria and Prince Alexander, arrived in the metropolis (en route for their residence, Richmond-park) last month, from their protracted visit to Italy. In Paris they remained one day at the British Embassy, where a limited party was invited to meet them at luncheon. The Duke of Teck and his daughter visited the Louvre, which is closed to the public on Mondays.

OFFICERS in India are now allowed to wear shirt-collars with their undress uniform on one important condition—not to show more than one-eighth of an inch above the collar of the coat.

THE DUKE OF SUTHERLAND has lately returned from a four months' cruise in the Mediterranean. After Ascot there is to be a ball at Stafford House, at which the Prince and Princess of Wales and other members of the Royal Family will be present.

PRINCE ALBERT VICTOR has arrived at Trinity College, Cambridge, from Sadringham. Prince George has resumed his duties on board H.M.S. *Excellent* at Portsmouth.

THE DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE has recently sustained a bereavement in the loss of a faithful and devoted servant, Josephine Freyden, who had lived forty-one years with her Royal Highness as dresser, and by fidelity of service and warm attachment had become a valued friend. She died in the Duchess's apartment at St. James's Palace. Desiring to be buried with her mother at Frankfurt, before the journey the sub-Dean of the Chapels Royal read a service from the portions of the English burial-service in the presence of the Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, the Duke of Cambridge, Lady Geraldine Somerset, and all the members of Her Royal Highness's household.

STATISTICS.

THE SUEZ CANAL.—The returns of the navigation through the Canal for the years 1882, 1883, and 1884 shows that, although the number of vessels passing through the Canal in 1884 was actually less by 23 than in 1883—3,284 vessels as against 3,307—yet the net tonnage for 1884, 5,871,500 tons as against 5,775,681 tons, was greater by 95,819 tons, showing an increase in the size of the vessels using the Canal. This increase of tonnage, however, was not sufficient to prevent a diminution in the transit receipts caused by a reduction of 50*d.* in the navigation dues from January 1, 1884, and by the abolition of the pilotage tax on July 1 of that year. The transit receipts for 1884 were £2,378,113*s.* 5*d.*, as against £2,847,812*s.* 1*d.* for 1883. As to the comparative amounts of shipping of the various nationalities for the three years, the percentages of net tonnage for the year 1884 do not vary much from those of the previous year, the tonnage of Great Britain forming 76 per cent., and that of France 9.6 per cent. of the total tonnage engaged. In 1884 the number of British vessels was 2,474, of 6,312,553 gross tons, compared with 300 French of 829,398 tons, 145 Dutch of 389,756 tons, and 130 German of 238,293 tons.

GEMS.

It is impossible that an ill-natured man can have a public spirit; for how should he love ten thousand men who never loved one?

A wise and good man does nothing for appearance, but everything for the sake of having acted well.

We ought not to judge of men's merits by their qualifications, but by the use they make of them.

Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not.

By struggling with misfortunes we are sure to receive some wounds in the conflict; but a sure method to come off victorious is by running away.

If the human intellect hath once taken a liking to any doctrine, it draws everything else into harmony with that doctrine, and to its support.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

BEST GINGERBREAD.—One egg, one-fourth cup of butter, one-half cup of sugar, one-half cup of treacle, one-half cup of sour milk, one teaspoonful of soda, ginger, and one and one-half cups of flour. It will be very soft when mixed, but do not add more flour, as it is a light and delicate cake.

BREAD PANCAKES.—Take stale bread and soak over night in sour milk; in the morning rub through a colander, and to one quart add the yolks of two eggs, one tablespoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of soda, two teaspoonfuls of sugar, and flour enough to make a batter rather thick; add last the well-beaten whites of the eggs, and bake.

BREAKFAST CAKE.—Two tablespoonfuls of sugar, two tablespoonfuls of butter, two eggs, one cup of milk, one (scanty) quart of flour, one teaspoonful of soda, two of cream tartar. Bake twenty minutes in a quick oven. Eat hot with butter.

FRIED CHICKEN.—Joint the chickens, and lay them in salt and water for half-an-hour; drain them, and wipe them perfectly dry with a coarse towel; sprinkle them with pepper and salt and a little flour; put them in boiling lard until they are of a light brown, being careful to turn them. Take them out and put upon a dish; cover it and set near the fire; pour into the skillet a little water and a cup of cream, stirring it briskly; garnish the chickens with parsley, and pour upon the gravy.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ALLEGORIES and spiritual significations, when applied to faith, and that seldom, are laudable; but when they are drawn from the life and conversation they are dangerous, and, when men make too many of them, pervert the doctrine of faith. Allegories are like ornaments, but not of proof.

EVASIONS are the common shelter of the hard-hearted, the false, and the impotent when called upon to assist; the really great alone plan instantaneous help, even when their looks or words presage difficulties.

MAY we look among the band of ministering spirits for our own departed ones? Whom would God be more likely to send us? Have we in Heaven a friend who knew us to the heart's core—a friend to whom we have unfolded our soul in its secret recesses, to whom we have confessed our weaknesses and deplored our griefs? If we are to have a ministering spirit, who better adapted? Have we not memories which correspond to such a belief?

THE highest greatness—surviving time and stone—is that which proceeds from the soul of man. Monarchs and cabinets, generals and admirals, with the pomp of court and circumstances of war, in the lapse of time disappear from sight; but the prisoners of truth, though poor and lowly, especially those whose example elevates human nature, and teaches the rights of man that "a government of the people, by the people, for the people, may not perish from the earth"—such a harbinger can never be forgotten, and their renown spreads coextensive with the cause they served so well.

SCENT OF FLOWERS.—In Italy and elsewhere the common people do not highly or permanently value scentless flowers. A flower without fragrance is to them almost a dead flower. We put the question to a group of English children coming from a wood laden with spells. "What makes you like pin-roses?" "The scent of them," was the answer. A little further along the lane came another troop, and the question was repeated. This time the answer was, "Because they smell so nice." No flower has been more widely revered than the unassuming sweet basil, the *Basilico odorato* of Sicilian songs, the Tulasi plant of India, where it is well-nigh worshipped in the house of every pious Hindu. The scale is graduated thus: The flower which has no smell is plucked in play, but left remorselessly to wither as children leave their daisy chains; the flower which has a purely sweet and fresh perfume is arranged in nosegays, set in water, pressed and enjoyed for the day; the flower which has a scent of spice and incense and aromatic gums bears off honours scarcely less than divine.

A ZERBA.—The zerba is a native light barricade constructed in the form of a square, and, by the Arabs, made of mimosa brush, piled with the prickly branches outward, and built high enough to make the offer to overleap them impracticable. The sharp, jagged branches present a forbidding aspect to the Arabs and blacks, who have no taste for stinging their naked bodies against them. The great tactics of the Arabs is to attack by "rushing" in the hope to overwhelm, by the very impetus of the assault, the waiting enemy. As a means of checking this "rush" the zerba has been found very effective, and the English adopted the native example as a very excellent provision against a decisive charge from the enemy in open fighting. But any sort of superficial fortification flung up to meet a temporary requirement is now referred to in the despatches as a zerba. It corresponds, in fact, to the fence-rail breastworks and the light earthworks thrown up by our troops in the war of the Union. The principle of construction is a very old one, and is a very good one in primitive warfare where the serious fighting is in hand-to-hand encounters.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- C. W.—The Isle of Wight.
- A. F.—1. Eugene Aram was executed in 1759.
- T. R.—1. Can form no estimate of its value. 2. No recipe or book upon the subject.
- R. D.—Tu-Due, Emperor of Anam, died on July 20, 1883, aged 54.
- T. R. B.—Not recognised, we believe, as "regular" by the profession.
- N. M. S.—The nymph Galatea was enamoured of Acis, a Sicilian shepherd, who was crushed under a huge rock by the monster Polyphemus, his rival.
- R. B.—Died Turpin was the son of a farmer. He began life as a butcher, and stole the sheep from neighbouring farms by night to sell in his shop by day.
- M. W.—The use of calomel predisposes to cold, and thus frequently brings on inflammation or consumption.
- R. F.—1. Otway, the poet, is said to have been choked by eating a roll too hastily. 2. French prunes are the best for table use.
- L. S. H.—1. Yes; there is a tax of one guinea for each person. 2. The hair-powder tax began in M.y., 1796, when powdered hair was the height of the fashion.
- T. M.—Yours is about the average height and weight for a boy of eighteen. You may grow a little taller, if not heavier, before attaining the age of twenty-one.
- T. N.—Green and gold hangings would look very handsome; but ascertain, before purchasing, if the green contains arsenic.
- M. F.—Brigham Young died in 1877. He joined the Mormons in 1832. He founded Salt Lake City in July, 1847. He was indicted for polygamy in 1871, but no conviction was obtained.
- W. G.—Sultana raisins are made from a kind of grape which has no seeds. They are sometimes called Smyrna raisins, because they are brought from Smyrna in Asia Minor.
- R.—1. The hair is blonde. 2. Blue eyes would be more in harmony, but grey is the next best colour. 3. Your weight is rather above the average for a girl of sixteen. 4. Fair.
- C. C.—Perhaps it is the fault of the gentlemen who accompany you. They should introduce you more generally, and not monopolise so much of your attractive company.
- H. C. S.—Cornelius Vanderbilt, popularly known as the "Commodore," owned during his steamship career twenty-one steamers, eleven of which he built, and with steamboats his entire fleet numbered sixty-six vessels; hence the title given to him by the public.
- M. T.—Rice glue, or Japanese cement, is made by mixing rice flour with cold water, and then boiling it until it is thick. When it is very thick, it may be pressed into moulds and made into models, busts, and other articles.
- L. G. M.—The best promoters for strengthening and thickening the hair are, keeping it scrupulously clean and frequently cutting it. Having the head shaved would cause it to grow thicker, but we fear the grey hairs would again appear. The hair, if kept well brushed, does not require grease. Beef marrow clarified and coconut oil are, we believe, equally good.
- G. E.—1. It is found by careful calculation, based upon observations registered by the Babylonians, that the moon in those ancient times must have occupied several more days in completing her revolutions than she now does. Hence it is concluded that this faithful satellite is drawing nearer to the earth, and should her progress remain unchecked, consequently to destruction. 2. The moon has no inhabitants, at all events none similar to those on this planet. Eternal winter reigns over its rocky, sterile, desolate domain.
- G. V. T.—The following forms a nice cooling wash for the face during the summer months, and removes freckles: Sweet almonds, five ounces; bitter almonds, one ounce; rose water, two pints and a half; white curd soap, half-an-ounce; spermaceti, half-an-ounce; white wax, half-an-ounce. English oil of lavender, twenty drops; otto of roses, twenty drops; rectified spirits, one pint. Blanch the almonds, and beat them up with the soap and a little of the rose water; melt together the oil of almonds, spermaceti, and white wax, and mix with the former into a cream, and strain it through thin muslin; then add gradually the remaining rose water, and, lastly, the spirit with the essential oils mixed thereto.
- D. H. H.—Palmetto is the common name of the palmettes which grow in the United States. There are four kinds, but the chief one is the cabbage palmetto, which grows in the South-eastern States from South Carolina to Florida. It is from 20 to 50 feet high, and 12 to 15 inches in diameter. The bud or cabbage is sometimes eaten, and palm wine has been made from its juice. Its leaves are used for thatching buildings, and for making hats, baskets, mats, &c. As the teredo or ship worm will not eat its wood, palmetto timber is in great use in the South for wharves and other buildings under water. The palmetto tree is the emblem of the State of South Carolina.
- DELIA H.—A very rapid and handy mode of testing the enamel or tinning of cooking vessels, &c., for lead is recommended by M. Forde. The vessel is carefully cleaned to remove all grease, &c. A drop of strong

nitric acid is then placed on the enamel or tinning, and evaporated to dryness by gentle heat. The spot where the action of the acid has taken place is now wetted by a drop of solution of potassium iodide (five parts iodide to 100 of water), when the presence of lead is at once shown by the formation of yellow lead iodide. Tin present in the enamel, &c., does not give a yellow spot when the potassium iodide is added, the stannic oxide formed by the nitric acid not being acted upon.

T. H.—The term "Yankee" is from "Yangees," which signifies a corruption of "English." The name was given to the colonists originally by the natives of Massachusetts.

D. H.—The cause of the water being hard, and not dissolving soap, arises from some earthy salt. The water should be boiled, and, if allowed to stand, the earthy matter (combined with acid) will be in the sediment at the bottom.

D. G.—1. Any inexpensive washing material would do. Trim with cream lace. 2. The mantle might be trimmed with the jet floral braid now so fashionable, and a quantity of Spanish lace.

T. N.—If you do not wish the teeth extracted, the following is said to be a good cure for the toothache: Take a piece of sheet zinc about the size of a sixpence, and a piece of silver about the same dimensions, and hold the defective tooth between them.

THE ELDEST SISTER.

The eldest sister!—oh, how soon

The little ones on her depend.

If in the granting of a boon

She proves herself to be their friend,

And in a kind and helpful way

Directs their studies and their play.

A princess of the realm she stands,
Prompt to enforce the queen's commands,
And her young subjects honour her,
The dignities of rank confer,
So that the youthful maid appears
Older, far older than her years.

Their little quarrels she adjusts;
Their little secrets she entrusts
To her; for she is good and wise,
A perfect wonder in their eyes,
And often are her praises sung
By little folks, their mates among.

The eldest sister!—with what grace
She slips into the mother's place,
When sickness enters on the scene,
Or Death detrones the reigning queen:
Thoughtful for those who need her care,
She beams an angel, then and there.

Unmindful of herself, she gives
Her heart's devotion while she lives
To those who with their love repay
Indebtedness from day to day,
And value, far beyond all price,
Her elder sisterly advice.

O wise is she who keeps her hold
Of all the hearts within the fold:
A faithful guide, exemplar, friend,
Ready to counsel and commend,
With love, with dignity and grace,
Filling an elder sister's place.

J. F.

K. C.—Melons are a species of the cucumber. It is a fruit that is apt to disagree with persons in this country, but is of great value in its native clime, as it affords a cool, refreshing juice, assuages thirst, mitigates febrile disorders, compensating thereby, in no small measure, for the oppressive heats.

W. S. T.—1. It is a mistake; both salt and alum permanently injure the enamel of the teeth. The toothpaste you mention for whitening the teeth—a mixture of honey and charcoal—is good. 2. For toilet-vinegar, take two ounces of dried rose-leaves, one pint of white wine vinegar, quarter-of-a-pint of esprit de rose, triple; macerate for a fortnight in a closed vessel, then filter.

LENA.—Perhaps the milk is placed in too deep a vessel. Cream cannot rise through a great depth of milk; therefore it should be placed in shallow dishes, not exceeding an inch in depth. Then, again, the temperature greatly interferes with the rising of the cream, the milk being poorer and thinner in cold, damp weather than in warm.

F. P. T.—1. There is no particular choice. Make application at one of the most extensive manufactories. 2. Not always—sometimes the reverse. 3. Your eyes, as described, are very peculiar and decidedly uncommon. We do not know what to call them. 4. Artists differ widely on the subject. Both styles of beauty are greatly admired.

L. G.—The locust tree grows first in North America, but it is now raised also in different parts of Europe. It grows very large in the south-western parts of the United States, and is much planted in places where trees are scarce. Its leaves are soft and velvety, and it bears clusters of white, sweet-smelling flowers. Its wood, which is yellow, is very valuable, and is used for railway ties, fence posts, and in building certain parts

of ships. The honey locust, found mostly in the Southern and South-western States, and in parts of the Middle States, is also a large tree, but it is not so valuable as the common locust, its wood being good for little more than firewood. It bears small flowers, and long, flat pods, full of brown seeds in a honey-like pulp. Its trunk and large limbs have on them long, sharp thorns in branches. The locust tree derives its name from its branches, which look something like the legs of a flying locust.

H. H. T.—Inks of bright aniline colours are made by mixing one dram of the proper colour with one and a half ounces of alcohol in a glass or enamelled iron vessel. Let it stand for three hours. Then add thirteen ounces of distilled water, and subject the whole to a gentle heat until the alcohol has evaporated; that is, until no odour of alcohol is perceptible; then add five drams of gum-arabic dissolved in two ounces of water. As the aniline colours of commerce vary a great deal in quality, the amount of dilution must vary with the sample used, and the shade determined by trial.

M. S.—1. Meerschaum is roughly shaped into blocks, or sometimes into rude forms of pipes, for exportation. To produce the yellow and brown colours, which are much admired in the pipes, and which are brought out only after long smoking, the blocks are kept for some time in a mixture of wax and fatty matters. A portion of these is absorbed, and being subsequently acted upon by the heat and the tobacco fumes, assumes various shades of colour. The lightest qualities are too porous for producing the best pipes, and unless they be of the right quality, it is difficult to make them colour well. 2. To clean or soften a meerschaum pipe, place it in a vessel of cold milk and let the milk boil slowly until the nicotine appears on the surface; then boil the pipe in wax. 3. Meerschaum dust is used to polish the pipes. 4. No recipe to colour in the way desired.

R. B. M.—Wait until the young man has summoned up enough courage to ask the vital query, "Will you marry me?" In other words, be guided by the old saw, "It is manners to wait till you're asked." Your mother is right in objecting to the union of her beautiful, healthy daughter to a person who shows unmistakable signs of consumption, and you should not chafe under her restraint. It is needless for us to explain to such an intelligent person as yourself the reasons for her opposition to such a marriage. The mere fact of his having given you a ring is not proof positive that he considers you his affianced; it may only be a token of his esteem. We earnestly hope you will look at the matter in its proper light, and not allow your passion to get the upper hand of your good judgment.

H. H. F.—A beautiful ink, writing pale at first, but turning intensely black in a short time, is made by putting four ounces of well-bruised Aleppo galls in a quart of clean, soft water, in a well-stoppered bottle, and allowing the mixture to remain for ten days, or even longer, with frequent shaking. Then add one and a quarter ounce of gum arabic (dissolved in a wineglassful of water) and half-an-ounce of lump sugar. Stir well, and afterwards add an ounce and a-half of green copperas, crushed small. Shake occasionally for two or three days, and then pour off into another bottle for use, although it is best to let it stand for two or three weeks. This will doubtless suit your purpose, as it does not, corn de steel pens as quickly as ink, made according to other recipes, and is also devoid of the gumminess found in what's known as "brilliant" inks.

J. N. C.—In getting together a nice library, you should have at least two or three books in your own language, such as those treating on rhetoric, grammar, and kindred subjects. Then for historical knowledge, select such as Grote's History of Greece, Josephus, Herodotus, Burton on Scotland, Ruskin on Arcadia, Empire, Lamartine on France, Motley on Holland, Prescott on South America and Spain, Froude, Macaulay, and Green on England, and so on. Also procure a first-class encyclopedia, and some popular works on science, as Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks," "Footprints of the Creator," and Kingsley and Ruskin will also furnish interesting reading on scientific subjects. Biography and travels should not be forgotten, after which, if possible, add the works of Shakespeare, Scott, Milton, Burns, Byron, Cooper, Holmes, Gray, Longfellow, and Tennyson. Further additions may be made as tastes may dictate and finances permit.

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